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ABSTRACT

This quarterly publication contains 13 articles covering various aspects of education and youth employment in Australia. "Youth Employment Strategies: Public Service of South Australia" (Jenny Rhodes) describes opportunities for South Australian youth to enter public service. "School Influences on Retention in Victorian Government High Schools" (John Ainley, Margaret Batten, Hilary Miller) discusses the differences that appropriate programs in schools can make to retention rates. "Are Girls 'Youth'?" (Shirley Sampson) and "The Culture of Our High Schools and Its Impact on Girls" (Margaret Vickers) focus on sex fairness issues. In "School and Work: Some Teacher and Student Perspectives," Lyle Munro reports on the impact of students' part-time work. Susan King reviews "Confronting School and Work," a contribution to the debate on school effectiveness by Peter Dwyer, Bruce Wilson, and Roger Woock. "A Tracer Study of School Leavers in Indonesia" (Ruth Daroesman) and "Teenage Unemployment in New Zealand" (Barrie Stacey) look at experiences in other countries. Current youth studies research is summarized in "Youth Labour Market: The Effects of Unemployment" (C. Blakers); "The Community Employment Program: Job Creation or Work Experience?" (Moira Rowland); and "The Community Employment Program: Valuable Experience for Future Planning" (Annie Kavanagh). The Participation and Equity Program is considered by Gerald Burke in "Demography, Participation and Finance: Some Aspects of the Commonwealth's Guidelines" and David Pettit in "The Participation and Equity Program: One Year On." (KC)

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Department of Sociology

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Youth Studies Bulletin

A quarterly publication of the
NATIONAL CLEARINGHOUSE
FOR YOUTH STUDIES

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YOUTH STUDIES BULLETIN

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AUSTRALIANS ALL .....

The Australians will be a fretful, clever, perverse, irritable race ... selfish, self-reliant, prone to wander, caring little for home ties ... freed from the highest burden of intellectual development (genius) ...

. . . . . .

... in another hundred years the average Australasian will be a tall, coarse, strong-jawed, greedy, pushing, talented man, excelling in swimming and horsemanship. His religion will be a form of Presbyterianism: his national policy a democracy tempered by the rate of exchange. His wife will be a thin, narrow woman, very fond of dress and idleness, caring little for her children, but without sufficient brain-power to sin with zest. In five hundred years, unless recruited from foreign nations, the breed will be wholly extinct; but in that five hundred years it will have changed the face of nature, and swallowed up all our contemporary civilisation.

Marcus Clarke, 1877

* * * * * *

A lot of so-called A-class people in the socio-economic groups - the 20 per cent of the population who have stimulating jobs - would like watching the ABC because they are more interested in the real world. That 20 per cent is important, so let the ABC air to them.

Leave the commercials to air to the rest - the people for whom the working week is time to fill in between the weekends, who have boring jobs and who don't like their wives, because they got married for the wrong reasons before the advent of the Pill.

There's no romance in their lives - she has varicose veins, her hair is in curlers, she smokes, and he's not too attractive either. They need escape, a window to get away from the humdrum.

Bruce Gyngel, Chairman of the Australian Broadcasting Tribunal, 1977

* * * * * *

ABOUT THE CLEARINGHOUSE

In 1985, the Clearinghouse enters its fourth year of operation, and we are pleased to have received from the Minister for Education and Youth Affairs a commitment in principle for its continuation in 1986. The assurance removes some of the uncertainties under which the Clearinghouse has operated.

As indicated in the August 1984 Youth Studies Bulletin, we have been made very aware during this year of the growth of interest in education, training and employment for young people. This growing interest has been reflected during the year in the volume and variety of material coming to the Clearinghouse, in the requests for extended coverage which we are receiving from readers and in our growing mailing list.

We began the year in February 1984 with a mailing address list of 364 (about 100 more than in February 1983). Multiple copies to some addresses brought this total to 408. During the year we were able to reduce the numbers of multiple copies, and our list at 17 August showed 501 addresses and 28 additional copies. Since then, further requests have continued to come in bringing the total to somewhere around 550 copies - about 100 more than at the same time last year.

Response to the questionnaire for our 1985 mailing list have been coming in at a much faster rate than in previous years. It seems fairly clear that the 600 copies we have been printing this year will not meet the demand in 1985. Growth in demand has increased each year and has been particularly steady this year. Since our budget will not allow us to print more than the 600 copies without supplementary funding, we will need to consider some form of selection for distribution. We intend to discuss this problem with the Department of Education and Youth Affairs as soon as possible. Meanwhile, **we wish to remind readers who have not registered with us for 1985 that this is the last issue which will be sent to them. If you wish to remain on the Mailing List in 1985, please return the response form circulated in August or let us know in some other way.**

As indicated in the August Bulletin, we now have the Department's approval to charge for extra and back copies of our materials. The response to our questions on this matter in August has been sufficient to indicate a solid interest. We are therefore including in this and subsequent issues an Order Form for those who wish to buy such copies. The charge of $10 per issue covers current printing, postage and handling charges for the package of materials (Bulletin and Abstracts) each quarter. Orders must be accompanied by payment.

In this issue of the Bulletin, there are a number of articles which will, we think, be seen as timely by those concerned with the Participation and Equity Program (PEP). The Review Paper in this issue comprises two papers which look at the issues of PEP from different perspectives. Gerald Burke considers the financial and resource implications of the Federal Government's policies on participation and equity. David Pettit, drawing on the National Conference on the Participation and Equity Program as well as on his own discussions in the States, draws together the main issues of PEP, categorising them in a way which should help to focus constructive discussion and resolution of problems. Also relevant will be the papers in the section titled

Policies, Provisions and Participation. John Ainley, Margaret Batten and Hilary Miller discuss the difference which appropriate programs in schools can make to retention rates. Shirley Sampson and Margaret Vickers are concerned in their articles with the education of girls. Lyle Munro reports on his study of the role that part-time work by students does not play in their education.

In other sections, Jenny Rhodes outlines what the South Australian Public Service Board is doing to ensure that young people have opportunities to enter the public service. Susan King reviews a recent important contribution to the debate about how schools can meet the needs of the full range of their students. Looking at Other Countries, Ruth Daroesman outlines a study of school leaver experiences in Indonesia and Barrie Stacey provides a comprehensive overview of youth unemployment in New Zealand. In the Youth Studies Research section, the final article in the series on the youth labour market deals with the effects of unemployment. The section also includes two complementary articles on the Community Employment Program which are likely to be of wide interest. Moira Rowland meticulously documents the changing emphasis of the program; Annie Kavanagh provides the perspective on the program and its issues of someone who has been closely inolved in implementation.

We hope this issue of the Bulletin and the Abstracts will reach you in time to provide happy holiday reading.

With this last issue for 1984, we want to take the opportunity of expressing our thanks and appreciation to the very large numbers of people who have contributed in so many ways to the operation and development of the Clearinghouse: to those who have so generously written the articles for the Bulletin at considerable cost in time and effort, recompensed only by our grateful thanks; to those who have sent us material for the Abstracts; to our Advisory Committee whose interest we have come to rely on; to the Minister and the Department of Education and Youth Affairs whose funding allocation is the sine qua non; to the particular officers of that Department with whom we have our main contacts and to whom we are wont to take our troubles.

We also want to thank the many people at the ANU who have given us support and help during the year. Not least, we want to record our very great appreciation of those within the Clearinghouse who work with dedication, enthusiasm and not too many complaints throughout the year; Eveline Bancroft who copes with the vast amount of typing involved; Brenda Nicholson and Gail Lewis who, in the few hours a week for which we pay them, contribute enormously to the whole operation; our student helpers, Leonie Brown and Peter Milthorp, without whom nothing would be posted.

To all our readers we wish a Happy Christmas and New Year.

* * * * * *

QUIDNUNC

AFFAIRS OF INTEREST

. BUDGET ALLOCATIONS FOR LABOUR MARKET PROGRAMS

Major allocations in the 1984/85 budget for increased employment and training programs include:

- $410m. for job creation through the Community Employment Program (CEP), allowing for assistance to 65,000 unemployed people
- a 15 per cent increase to $122.2m. in expenditure on trade training support programs, including an additional 2,000 pre-vocational trade-based course places
- a 40 per cent increase in the non-trade Skills Training Program to $36m., a major part of which ($16m.) is for the continuation of the Labour Adjustment Training Arrangements (LATA) for the steel regions and their extension to the passenger motor vehicle industry
- $108.9m. under the Special Youth Employment Training Program (SYETP) to provide subsidised work experience assistance for about 87,500 unemployed young people
- an expansion of 76 per cent - to $40.9m. - in funds available under the Adult Wage Subsidy Scheme (AWSS) to assist some 21,000 long-term unemployed adults
- $50.9m. for employment and training assistance for Aborigines under the Training for Aboriginals Program (TAP), which represents a 24 per cent increase over 1983/84 expenditure
- a 23 per cent increase in expenditure on the Community Youth Support Scheme (CYSS) to $26.2m. which will enable a 10 per cent increase in current grant levels, upgrading of a number of existing projects, the establishment of some new projects and the implementation of some initiatives recommended in various CYSS studies, including special measures to assist certain disadvantaged groups in the labour market (see separate item in this section).

Initiatives of benefit to women include:

- an additional 500 places earmarked for women on pre-vocational trade-based courses
- the continued commitment to achieving the 50 per cent objective for female participation under CEP
- an allocation of $203,000 for a new Women's Research and Employment Initiatives Program (WREIP), which will enable comprehensive research activity relevant to the development of specific initiatives in the field of women's employment.

Other allocations include:

- computerisation of CES job seeker records ($3.3m.), which would significantly improve the efficiency of the labour market functions performed by the CES
- occupational health and safety, with $12.1m. available in 1984/85 for the establishment of a National Occupational Health and Safety Commission to develop and co-ordinate the Government's national strategy in this area

- industrial democracy, involving an estimated expenditure of $1.13m. on measures designed to encourage the expansion of industrial democracy in the public and private sectors
- a national longitudinal survey of long-term unemployed youth, designed to gather important information on the effects of prolonged unemployment - to be undertaken by the Bureau of Labour Market Research at a cost of $1m. in 1984/85 (see Abstract 84/AB: 160).

Further information may be obtained from the Department of Employment and Industrial Relations in Canberra.

* * * * * *

. TRAINING FOR ALTERNATIVE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES*

The Government recognises that there are people in the community who prefer alternative and communal lifestyles and work structures, and that these alternatives could provide an option for some people facing difficulties in the current economic climate. Various Commonwealth Departments have been investigating possible ways in which the Commonwealth might facilitate developments in this area.

The Department of Education and Youth Affairs has been considering ways in which people may be assisted to acquire appropriate skills for the management and operation of co-operative enterprises. Training and support are widely acknowledged to be vital for the success of co-operative ventures and other alternative enterprises. Training is of importance in a range of areas, including co-operative, administrative, business and entrepreneurial skills, marketing, inter-personal skills and corporate decision-making.

In the 1984/85 Budget the Department of Education and Youth Affairs has received an allocation of $150,000 to develop and mount a number of pilot training and support strategies aimed at assisting those who wish to be involved in co-operatives or sustainable communities. The options to be tested are being identified through a consultative research exercise.

In choosing the pilot training and support strategies, the Department wishes to take account of a range of variables which could influence their effectiveness. These include the location of training, including geographical areas of need in Australia, and options for the actual venue for training, such as existing educational institutions, local presentations by mobile lecturers and use of local resource tutors on a network support basis. A necessarily related issue is the timing of courses, and options could include evenings over a period of weeks, whole weekends, live-in courses for network tutors or correspondence courses. Other variables are the scope and transferability of courses or modules and various options for administration of training.

* *From Office of Youth Affairs, Department of Education and Youth Affairs, Canberra.*

It is intended that this project will produce valuable information on the types of training and support which may be of most assistance for people, especially the young, who wish to join or create a co-operative or sustainable community.

These funds do not extend to other forms of direct support for co-operatives and other ventures. However the Department of Employment and Industrial Relations is considering some of the broader issues relating to alternative forms of employment, and further information concerning progress in these areas could be obtained from that Department.

* * * * * *

. COMMUNITY YOUTH SUPPORT SCHEME (CYSS)

The Federal Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations, Mr Willis, has announced that CYSS will be expanded and substantially upgraded in the twelve months from November 1984. Thirty-six existing projects (12 per cent) will have their funding increased to match increasing local need, and fourteen new projects will be introduced to extend CYSS into new areas of high need. There will now be 319 CYSS projects throughout Australia. In addition, all CYSS projects will receive a minimum 10 per cent increase in grant levels in 1984-85-86 to cover cost increases and improve accommodation. In overall terms, the Federal Government has allocated $26.239m. for CYSS in 1984/85, an increase of $4.89m., or 23 per cent, over expenditure in 1983/84.

From 1 November 1984 most projects will be on one of the following standard grant levels:

- Level 1 $44,000 per annum
- Level 2 $72,000 per annum
- Level 3 $100,000 per annum

Details of the grants to individual CYSS projects can be obtained from the Department of Employment and Industrial Relations in Canberra.

* * * * * *

. INSTITUTE OF FAMILY STUDIES: FAMILY INFORMATION CENTRE

The Institute, a Commonwealth Statutory Authority established under the Family Law Act, commenced operation in February 1980. It is a research organisation whose primary task is to conduct and foster research into factors affecting marital and family stability in Australia. Included in its charter is a commitment to disseminate information about families and family life in Australia. To achieve this, the Institute's Family Information Centre (FIC) was set up.

The FIC maintains the Institute's research library and provides an

information service to researchers, secondary and tertiary teachers, students, practitioners in the helping professions, members of government and non-government organisations and interested members of the public. The FIC is responsible also for the editing and publishing of Institute publications.

FAMILY database (Australian Family Studies Database) is a computer based bibliographic reference system which has been developed in the Family Information Centre. Work on a pilot database was begun in 1983 and FAMILY became operational in September 1984.

The database contains references from 1980 onwards to Australian material or to material written by Australians in overseas publications. Books, journal articles, conference papers, government reports, research reports, statistical publications, theses and unpublished papers are included. Subjects covered are:

- Trends and change in marriage and the family
- Family and society
- Family law
- Organisations and services to families
- Economics and the family
- Family types, relations and dynamics
- Mate selection and marriage
- Issues related to sexuality and fertility
- Minority groups and special families
- Counselling and education for marriage and parenthood
- Research and methodology.

ONLINE search and retrieval is available through AUSINET, the computer network of ACI Computer Services. Access to AUSINET can be arranged through your library or by contacting ACI Information Retrieval Group, P.O. Box 43, Clayton, Victoria 3168: Tel. [03] 544 8433.

IN PRINT. The first hard copy volume of entries in FAMILY database will be published in December 1984. Thereafter a quarterly update will be printed.

Further information may be obtained from:

Editor
Family Institute of Family Studies
766 Elizabeth Street
Melbourne, Victoria 3000
Telephone: [03] 342 9100

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. AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS (ABS)

Employment, Underemployment and Unemployment 1966-83, Australia, Cat. No.6246.0. Canberra: ABS, October 1984 [55p.]

This publication supersedes the earlier publication Unemployment, Underemployment and Related Statistics, Australia (6236.0). It analyses the trends in employment, underemployment, unemployment and so-called 'hidden' unemployment over the period 1966 to 1983. It begins (Chapter 1)

with a very clear and useful discussion of the concepts of employment, unemployment, 'hidden' unemployment and underemployment, showing how the concepts form the basis of the definitions on which the various statistical classifications are made. Chapters 2 to 5 present statistical summaries under the headings Employment (Chapter 2), Underemployment (Chapter 3), Unemployment (Chapter 4) and Marginal Attachment to the Labour Force and 'Hidden' Unemployment (Chapter 5). Chapter 6 provides details on data sources and references for the statistics presented, and the Appendix outlines the questionnaire used in the ABS Labour Force Survey.

Employment Benefits, Australia, August 1984, Preliminary. Cat. No. 6332.0. Canberra: ABS October 1984 [6p.]

This publication indicates that there is more to having a job than the wage or salary earned. It underlines just how much of material comfort is denied to the unemployed. The main features of the August issue are summarised as follows: Of the estimated 5,358,200 employees in August 1984, 82.8 per cent were provided with annual leave, 82.5 per cent were provided with sick leave and 66.7 per cent with long-service leave by their current employers. The inclusion of these three additional benefits to the survey in 1984 ... largely explains the difference between the 89.6 per cent of employees receiving some kind of employment benefit in August 1984 and the 57.9 per cent who received a benefit in August 1983.

Between August 1983 and August 1984 there was a general trend towards more benefits being received by employees. This was most marked for goods and services benefits (received by 21.4 per cent of employees in 1984 compared with 17.6 per cent in 1983) and telephone benefits (9.3 per cent in 1984 compared with 8.6 per cent in 1983.).

The most common benefits received other than leave provisions were superannuation fund membership (44.1 per cent of beneficiaries) and free of discounted goods and services (23.9 per cent).

. NSW YOUTH EMPLOYMENT PAYROLL TAX INCENTIVE SCHEME

The New South Wales Government is offering a substantial payroll tax concession to eligible firms who employ an additional young person or young persons full-time for at least twelve months. This concession may be used in conjunction with Commonwealth government subsidy schemes such as the Special Youth Employment Training Program, but does not apply to apprentices or tradespersons for whom other schemes are available.

This concession is worth $1,500 for each additional eligible young person hired or $2,500 for each additional eligible young person hired from a disadvantaged group (i.e. long-term unemployed, aborigines, migrants with language difficulties, disabled persons or ex-prisoners). Firm eligibility will be determined on the basis of additionality (i.e. jobs over and above existing staff levels), the quality of training offered as well as a firm's willingness to hire young people from disadvantaged groups. Eligible young persons must be unemployed when hired.

* * * * * *

MISAPPREHENSIONS IN EDUCATION

The following were selected from among the Exam Howlers contributed to the Times Educational Supplement, 24 August 1984. We suggest they lend point to T.H. Huxley's acid comments on examinations quoted in this section.

History:

Two well-known crime-makers made alcohol to sell illegally in America. They were Al Capone and Mae West. Al Capone turned from a small time boot-licker (as they were called in those days) to the biggest crime leader in America.

. . . . . .

This was the beginning of a new error .....

. . . . . .

King Offer knocked orf the Danes. King Alfred knocked orf King Offer. Now we have Danish bacon.

Geography:

The border between Italy and Switzerland is in Germany.

. . . . . .

Sweden is noted for its huge canaries.

. . . . . .

A common disease of cereal crops is wheat germ.

Home Economics:

Q. Name two fillings for a duvet.
A. Jam and Cream.

Science:

The purpose of the black cloth over the belljar is to stop the plant from being distracted.

. . . . . .

Get a peanut, weigh it, burn it to nothing and then reweigh it.

. . . . . .

Photoperiodism occurs in animals when they hibernate and shed their leaves.

. . . . . .

Q. The electrolyte used in the manufacture of aluminium has a very high melting point. How is this lowered?

A. Using a crane.

. . . . . .

In Australia, they put mosquito nets over the beds at night to keep out the incest.

And one home-grown: There are lots of fnix in Australia.

* * * * * *

. From the Washington Post, 2 July 1984.

PUTTING KIDS TO WORK

The administration has been pushing the idea that cutting summer wages for young people by 25 per cent would help reduce disastrously high levels of unemployment among black teenagers. New results of a major youth employment program suggest that while lower wages aren't likely to produce many new jobs for inner-city youth, that won't be because these kids don't want to work.

The multi-million-dollar study guaranteed part-time and summer jobs to 76,000 low-income teenagers as long as they continued their high school educations. The project didn't have much success in persuading drop-outs to return to school, but it was enormously successful for those who remained in school. At a relatively modest cost, the project was able to increase employment among minority youth to the point where it was comparable to that of middle-class white youth.

The students - most of whom were black and had never held jobs before - were extremely interested in the jobs, and program operators were able to find useful work for them. As a result, their employment rates and earnings soared compared with those of low-income youth in other cities. The gains were especially significant because many of those young people in other cities were getting help from other job programs (which have since been terminated). Moreover, the chance to work while in school seems to have had a long-term effect on the job prospects of the youngsters in the program, because gains in employment and earnings persisted after the program ended.

The discouraging aspect of the study is that the private sector wasn't very interested in helping out. Program administrators were ultimately able to find private-sector jobs for about one-fifth of participants - usually in small retail stores. But hardly any private employers would hire the youths unless the government was willing to pick up 100 per cent of the wage cost.

That finding would suggest that, as other critics have contended, a 25 per cent cut in the minimum wage for youths would be a nice windfall for low-wage employers, but it isn't likely to persuade many employers to take a chance on a disadvantaged kid. That's not really surprising. For most employers, saving a few cents an hour is far less important than being sure that the person hired can do the job. The project shows that government - if it is interested - can help overcome barriers to employment by giving kids a chance to prove themselves.

* * * * * *

Teaching should be directed to develop that in which the pupil excels and correct the defects to which he is prone.

The Wisdom of Confucius -- i. Mencius;
ii. Li Ki

INQUIRIES AND REVIEWS

. TASK FORCE ON EDUCATION AND TECHNOLOGY

As a result of a decision of the Australian Education Council (AEC), a task force to develop policies on educational aspects of technological change has been established. The members of the task force are:

- the Hon. L.M.F. Arnold, Minister of Education and Minister for Technology in South Australia - Chairman
- Mr N.D. Alford, Queensland Department of Education
- Mr A. Bain, Commonwealth Department of Industry and Commerce
- Mr M.V. Cove, Tasmanian Education Department
- Ms N. Gilding, S.A. Department of Technical and Further Education
- Mr N. Hurst, Commonwealth Department of Science and Technology
- Mr G. Price, New South Wales Ministry of Education
- Ms L. Richardson, Northern Territory Department of Education
- Dr B.W. Smith, Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology
- Dr R.L. Vickery, Education Department of Western Australia
- Miss H. Williams, Commonwealth Department of Education & Youth Affairs.

The terms of reference of the Task Force are:

- To develop options for consideration by the AEC of a strategy of policy and program initiatives to assist and encourage the education system from early childhood through to post-tertiary, in stimulating, anticipating, shaping and responding adequately, to technological change, and an increased level of technological innovation in Australia
- The options referred to in Para.1 should be developed in the context of specified objectives in terms of:

  a) the need to develop the capacities and skills necessary for individuals to play a productive part in the changing economic and social life of Australia and adjust to structural change
  b) the need to distribute these capacities and skills more equally than in the past
  c) the need to take account of the effects of the application of technology on learning processes and achievements, and the quality of human relations both outside and inside the education system.

- Both short term and longer term options should be considered and estimates of the costs and cost effectiveness indicated
- To report from time to time to the Executive Committee and to report to the AEC at its 50th meeting (October 1985).

Further information may be obtained from Dr R.K. Browne, Secretary, Australian Education Council, 49 Spring Street, Melbourne, Vic. 3000.

* * * * * *

. EDUCATIONAL STATISTICS CO-ORDINATION COMMITTEE

This Committee was established by the Australian Education Council (AEC) as an advisory committee to assist in the planned development of a co-ordinated set of education statistics. The Committee is chaired by Mr R.E. Parry, Chairman, NSW Higher Education Board. Other members include the Chairman and Executive Officer of the following agencies:

- the National Data Base Workshop (Pre-school statistics)
- the AEC Committee on School Statistics
- the Commonwealth Schools Commission (Non-government school statistics)
- the Joint Committee on TAFE statistics
- the Advisory Committee on Advanced Education Statistics
- the Joint Committee on University Statistics.

The Committee's membership will also include representatives from the Australian Bureau of Statistics and the Commonwealth Department of Education and Youth Affairs.

The functions of the Committee are:

- to identify areas of education where further statistical information is required and make recommendations to Council regarding the most appropriate body to collect this information
- to identify areas of overlap where consistency of definitions is necessary for the aggregation of data to present a total picture and to facilitate negotiation towards developing such definitions
- to identify areas of data collection where replication exists and liaise with collection agencies to avoid such replication
- to establish a repository of information about the availability and location of statistical data related to education
- to provide advice to the Australian Education Council regarding the publication of, access to, and control of statistical data, including aspects arising out of Freedom of Information legislation
- to undertake such other projects as may be approved by the Council from time to time.

Further information may be obtained from Dr R.K. Browne, Secretary, Australian Education Council, 49 Spring Street, Melbourne, Victoria, 3000.

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. NOMENCLATURE OF TAFE AWARDS

An Australian Education Council Task Force has been set up to consider the nomenclature of TAFE awards in Australia, taking into account existing awards in the advanced education sector, with a view to ensuring compatability of awards. This Task Force is to make recommendations to the 49th (January 1985) AEC meeting. Its membership comprises:

- Mr K.I. Axton, Director-General of Education in Tasmania - Chairman
- Dr A. Pattinson, Director-General, Department of Technical and Further Education, New South Wales
- Mr L.P. Fricker, Director-General of Technical and Further Education, South Australia
- Mr W.L. Hamilton, Chairman, Queensland Board of Advanced Education
- Dr W.A. Pullman, Chairman, Western Australian Post-Secondary Education Commission.

Further information may be obtained from Dr R.K. Browne, Secretary, Australian Education Council, 49 Spring Street, Melbourne, Victoria, 3000.

* * * * * *

. THE WORKING PARTY ON INFORMATION RETRIEVAL SYSTEMS IN EDUCATION

The Working Party on Information Retrieval Systems in Education, which operates under the aegis of the Australian Education Council, has been involved with four projects. One project is concerned with the production of an annual listing of higher degrees in education accepted in Australia. A second project has been preliminary planning for a national curriculum information network. A further project, which is nearing completion, is the production of an Australian Thesaurus of Education descriptors for use in information databases. The fourth project is a Directory of Education Research and Researchers which is produced and released by the Commonwealth Department of Education and Youth Affairs.

At the 48th (June 1984) Australian Education Council meeting recommendations on two of these projects were endorsed:

- the Bibliography of Education Theses in Australia (1984) - an ongoing annual publication - is to include minor theses presented for higher degrees, and those for the years 1978 and 1979 are to be documentod
- the Australian Education Thesaurus, when completed, is to be published on behalf of the Australian Education Council, and it is to be included in the Australian Education Index (AEI) database.

Further information may be obtained from Dr R.K. Browne, Secretary, Australian Education Council, 49 Spring Street, Melbourne, Victoria, 3000.

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. REVIEW OF FEDERAL ABORIGINAL EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING PROGRAMS

A Committee of Review has been established to examine all Federal employment and training programs specifically for Aborigines, as part of the Government's initiatives to reduce the unemployment rate of more than 50 per cent among Aborigines to a level comparable with that of the general community. The Review is designed to discover if the programs now

operating are still relevant to the needs of Aborigines and, if not, what changes should be made to develop more effective labour market policy for Aborigines. The Review is expected to report by May 1985 and will before then take submissions from and engage in wide consultations with Aboriginal groups and other interested individuals and organisations.

The Committee comprises:

- Mr Mick Miller, Commissioner of the Aboriginal Development Commission - Chairman
- Dr H.C. Coombs, Visiting Fellow at the ANU
- Mr J. Morrison, Research Officer, National Aboriginal Conference, Western Australia
- Ms Mary Ann Bin-Sallik, Co-ordinator of the Aboriginal Task Force at the S.A. Institute of Technology
- Mr Fred Hall, former senior executive of IBM Australia and member of the National Training Council.

Specific terms of reference for the Review include:

- to examine the objectives, cost effectiveness, delivery and impact of existing programs specifically directed at providing employment and training for Aborigines (other than the Community Employment Program which has only recently been initiated)
- to assess the adequacy of the existing balance of employment and training opportunities provided to Aborigines in the private, public and community sectors having regard to the varying needs of different Aboriginal communities, including the needs of Aboriginal women
- to consider the adequacy of existing arrangements for the co-ordination of program activity for Aborigines (including CEP) and means for better integrating such programs
- to assess the outcomes of the National Employment Strategy for Aboriginals.

Further information may be obtained from the Department of Employment and Industrial Relations in Canberra.

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> Examination, like fire, is a good servant, but a bad master; and there seems to me to be some danger of its becoming our master. I by no means stand alone in this opinion. Experienced friends of mine do not hesitate to say that students whose career they watch, appear to them to become deteriorated by the constant effort to pass this or that examination ... They work to pass, not to know; and outraged Science takes her revenge. They do pass, and they don't know ...
>
> T.H. Huxley: Universities Actual and Ideal - 1874

ASPECTS

YOUTH EMPLOYMENT STRATEGIES: PUBLIC SERVICE OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA

*by Jenny Rhodes**

There has been widespread concern in recent years about young people's declining share of the Public Sector job market throughout Australia. This development is of particular concern when viewed in conjunction with overall youth unemployment trends.

Drawing on recent South Australian experience, this paper explores ways in which Public Sector organisations can aim to increase their intakes of young people, whilst at the same time achieving basic recruitment objectives: timeliness of recruitment action and quality of applicant.

There are arguably fewer organisations better suited to recruiting large numbers of young people than a Commonwealth or State bureaucracy. The nature of the work at the point of entry, the bottom of the career pyramid, is ideally suited to the level of skill and expectation of a young person entering the work force for the first time. However, this factor alone clearly does not result in large-scale Public Service youth intakes. In the case of the S.A. Public Service, certainly, special measures were required.

Youth Employment in the S.A. Public Service - Background

The imbalanced age profile of the S.A. Public Service has been a matter of some concern for several years. At the end of 1983, only 2.6 per cent of the S.A. Public Service workforce was in the 15-19 age group. Further, the number of young employees was declining at a rate which differed quite markedly from corresponding patterns which generally applied to other Public Services in Australia at the time - even in the overall climate of declining youth employment as outlined above.

In brief, recruitment patterns were tending to reinforce existing age-structures. When asked about their preference for mature-age applicants, Departmental managers offered several explanations from which two common threads emerged:

- School leavers enter the job market en masse at a particular time of year. Public Service recruitment activity is at a seasonal ebb at this time and the best recruits are consequently lost to other employers, notably banks and insurance companies. It is therefore not possible to ensure the quality of young recruits for vacancies on an 'as they arise' basis.

* *Public Service Board, South Australia*

- The higher skill-level of mature-age applicants is undeniably a genuine factor in some vacancy situations. Keyboard-based jobs are a good example. As approximately 60 per cent of base-grade clerical vacancies fall into this category in the S.A. Public Service, the problem is a significant one.

It is clear that any programs to address youth employment shortfalls need to take these issues into account.

Objectives of the 1983/84 Youth Employment Program

The management problems associated with an 'ageing' Public Service, combined with Government and community concern about youth unemployment, resulted in special youth employment strategies being developed in mid-1983.

The objectives of these strategies can be stated as follows:

... to recruit 300 young people into Public Service clerical positions in the period July 1983 - June 1984, having regard to the need to
- maintain a high standard of recruit
- pay special attention to disadvantaged groups.

Three hundred positions constitute three-fifths of annual clerical recruitment. The strategies themselves were threefold:

- all appropriate recruitment programs were weighted in favour of young people in the 15-19 age group
- one large-scale clerical recruitment program was conducted exclusively for school leavers
- funds were made available so that early offers of employment could be made to 100 high-calibre school leavers. These young people commenced duty in January 1984 in a numerary capacity in anticipation of vacancies to occur in the period January-June 1984.

The Program - Key Features

These strategies were pursued actively throughout 1983/84. As an ongoing measure, emphasis was given to the 15-19 age group in all clerical recruitment programs. All relevant press advertisements featured a special invitation to young applicants and age was taken into account as a short-listing factor, where appropriate, in filling day-to-day vacancies.

However, most of the young applicants were drawn from the School Leaver Program, the specific clerical intake directed towards young people in their final years of secondary education. The Program, which in one form or another spanned the whole year, had several features worthy of comment:

July — <u>Publicity and Marketing</u>

- Memorandum to Departments, inviting their participation and offering a financial incentive of up to 6 months funding for the employment of high-calibre school leavers
- Press statement by the Premier

- Series of seminars for secondary school student counsellors, focusing on career opportunities, the selection process (in particular entrance standards) and changing patterns in the workforce
- Individual letter to all Aboriginal school leavers inviting their applications.

August — Applications

- Advertisements in select metropolitan and country media
- Approximately 1800 applications accepted.

September — Testing

- All applicants undertook a clerical aptitude test and/or typing speed and accuracy test, according to their stated skills and interests
- Special test sessions were held for Aboriginal and disabled applicants, generally in small groups or one-to-one. These applicants also attended an informal screening and counselling interview.

October — Interviews

- Applicants were shortlisted for interview on the basis of test results and applications
- Approximately 400 school leavers were interviewed by Departmental Personnel Officers
- Progress of Aboriginal and disabled applicants was closely monitored.

November — Selections

- Selections were made for the 100 supernumerary positions
- Letters of offer were sent out.

December — Payroll Transactions

- Offers accepted and confirmed
- Payroll transactions completed.

January — Commencement

- 100 supernumeraries started work
- Induction Seminars were conducted.

February — Further Appointments (until end of June)

- Supernumeraries absorbed into ongoing vacancies as they occurred
- Further vacancies filled with school leavers from the reserve list.

April — Evaluation and Planning

- Evaluation of 1983/84 program
- Planning of 1984/85 strategies.

Results

The results of the Program have been pleasing. 371 people in the 15-19 age group were offered employment in the period July 1983 - June 1984. This is 150 more than the total for 1982/83.

The majority of these young people were recruited to clerical positions in Government Departments, although a small number gained employment as technical assistants or computer operators. This reflects normal Public Service recruitment patterns, where clerical vacancies predominate.

The total number of young recruits includes 7 Aboriginal and 5 significantly disabled school leavers, all of whom were applicants from the metropolitan area. In accordance with usual recruitment trends, only 9 positions were available in country regions. However, a further 13 young people from country areas gained employment in metropolitan positions, as a result of conscious efforts to offer positions to young people from regional centres with major youth unemployment problems.

The number of 15-19 year old people now working in Departments has risen from 362 (2.6 per cent of the Public Service workforce) in late 1983 to 512 (3.5 per cent of the workforce) in June 1984.

Many young people are now undertaking part-time post-secondary study, with the intention of seeking longer-term careers in professional or managerial areas. The high retention rate, representing a marked change from previous years, is a sign of the times rather than the product of deliberate measures.

The 1984/85 Program

The results of the 1983/84 Youth Employment Program constitute a step in the right direction but a first step only. A similar program is now underway to recruit a further 300 young people during 1984/85. Special attention is once again being directed towards disadvantaged groups and it is hoped that the numbers of Aboriginal, disabled and country recruits will be similar to last year's intakes.

The response to a recent press advertisement for school leavers has been excellent and Departments can look forward once again to a high standard of young recruits early in 1985. It is particularly pleasing to note the increased proportion of school-leaver applicants with sound keyboard skills and word-processing awareness.

At the time of writing, testing has been completed and interviews are in progress. There is every likelihood that the target figure will be reached, although, in the current climate, it is unlikely that the target will be exceeded as was the case in 1983/84.

In Summary

Recent experience in South Australia indicates that there are three prerequisites for a successful Youth Employment Program.

1. Public Service Board and Government Commitment

A clear statement of support at policy level is the starting point for a successful program which is aimed at any 'special' group. In the case of the South Australian Youth Employment Program, this support was obtained by offering a package which

- was in sympathy with the Government's youth policy
- addressed the significant Public Service management problems of age profile imbalance
- offered a means of increasing both the quality and quantity of the Public Service youth intake
- required an initial injection of funds, which would be offset by salary savings almost immediately.

2. Willing Participation by Client Departments

Co-operation of client Departments is essential to the smooth running of a major program. The Youth Employment Program had many selling points from a Departmental viewpoint. Apart from enabling the recruitment of quality school leavers in a timely manner, the Program provided two practical incentives for Departments -

. Financial

Young people were employed on special funds for up to 6 months. Many Departments viewed this as a funded training period, especially in keyboard areas.

. Administrative

Whilst Departments conducted their own selection interviews, all other administrative matters - including appointment paperwork and the running of induction seminars - were handled for them by the Public Service Board.

3. A Good Supply of the Right Kind of Applicant

The publicity given to the Program was an important success factor. Press advertisements emphasised the features of Public Service employment which are important to parents: job security, study leave provisions and diversity of career opportunity.

Aspects of interest to the young people themselves were approached through the provision of information to student counsellors in schools, aiming to answer two fundamental questions: How can I prepare myself to survive the selection process? What kind of work would I be doing as a Public Service clerk?

It has also proved valuable to convey to educators the reality of the Public Service job market, pointing out the kind of vacancies which most commonly occur and the skills required.

Youth employment initiatives to-date have proved rewarding for all parties. We are hoping for similar results in 1985, International Youth Year.

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POLICIES, PROVISIONS AND PARTICIPATION

SCHOOL INFLUENCES ON RETENTION IN VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT HIGH SCHOOLS

*by John Ainley, Margaret Batten and Hilary Miller**

In 1983 the ACER undertook a study of the retention of students from Year 10 to Year 12 in the government high schools of Victoria[1] (Ainley, Batten and Miller, 1984a). The study was undertaken at the request of, and with assistance from the Education Department of Victoria. Its primary focus was upon understanding the differences between schools in the retention of students to Year 12. In seeking an understanding of these differences the study examined school policy in relation to the school environment and incorporated the perspectives of students, teachers, former students and parents. The findings were based on analyses of official data from Victorian government high schools, and on more detailed analysis of 16 schools. The more detailed analyses incorporated the complementary use of quantitative and qualitative information from those 16 schools. Information from the analysis of official data was used to examine general patterns and that from the 16 schools was used to provide some possible interpretations of those patterns.

Differences Between Schools

In examining the retentivity of schools the index used was the important retention rates based on February enrolments over the Years 10 and 12. Retention over these year levels was studied because the focus of the study was on the 'post-compulsory years' of schooling (the apparent retention rate to Year 10 for the system was around 90 per cent). One consequence of using apparent retention rates as a measure of retentivity was that differences between students could have arisen from differences in internal retention of the schools 'own' students or from differences in the propensity of schools to attract transfers from other schools. The analysis of the official data was based on the population of high schools which had Year 12 enrolments. Excluded from the analysis were two high schools with a selective intake, the one senior high school (which only enrolled students in Years 11 and 12), and six 'community schools'. A few (six) 'prim-sec' schools had Year 12 enrolments but data on social background were not available, and for two high schools retention rate data were not recorded for February 1983. Thus for 1983 the analyses were based on 266 government high schools.

There were differences between high schools in the retention rate from Year 10 to Year 12 over the period studied. Over the period 1980 to 1982 the mean was steady at around 38 per cent (39 in 1982) with a

* *The authors are all members of staff of the Australian Council for Educational Research.*

standard deviation of 14. For 1983 the mean was 45 per cent with a standard deviation of 16. For individual schools, retention rates from Year 10 to Year 12 generally fluctuated from year to year, but when an average was taken over the three years from 1980 to 1982 there were differences between schools which were associated with the environment in which the school was located. Other things equal, these retention rates were higher in schools located in areas of higher socio-economic status (but the association was not strong), in schools with a higher percentage of students of non-English-speaking background, and in city rather than country schools. The effects of the socio-economic status and the ethnic background of students on school retention rates were also found in a national study of a sample of 130 schools (Ainley, Batten and Miller, 1984b) and were broadly consistent with other recent research findings on students continuing with education (Taft, 1975; Williams, Clancy, Batten and Girling-Butcher, 1980; Hayden, 1982). However it should be noted that these effects of social background were stronger for metropolitan than for non-metropolitan schools, presumably because there would be less between-school variation in the social composition of non-metropolitan than metropolitan schools.

In examining the influence of school programs on retention rates attention was focused on the retention rate from Year 11 to Year 12. There were two reasons for this choice. First, initial analyses had shown that most of the variance in retention from Year 10 to Year 12 was either uniquely associated with the Year 11 to Year 12 transition (49 per cent), or common to the Year 10-11 and Year 11-12 transition (37 per cent) with very little being unique to the Year 10-11 transition (14 per cent). In other words, in this system of schools it appeared that the transition from Year 11 to Year 12 was the critical point in terms of students completing high school. Secondly, it was at Year 12 level that data were available about curricular programs offered in Victorian high schools, and these programs were directed towards students in Year 12. In examining the retention rates from Year 11 to Year 12, regression analysis was used to examine the influence of the type of curriculum after allowing for any effect of differences in school size or differences in the social environment of the school. To examine the effect of curriculum, two variables were created. One was a dichotomous variable indicating whether or not the school was conducting a VISE (Victorian Institute of Secondary Education) Approved Study Structure: for government high schools, the Schools Year 12 and Tertiary Entrance Certificate (STC) course. The second was simply the number of accredited Group 2 subjects offered in the school.[2] In these analyses the dependent variable was the apparent retention rate from Year 11 to Year 12.

The results of the blockwise regression analyses for retention rates in 1983 and 1982 are shown in Table 1. For each year two types of data are recorded. First, the table contains the multiple correlations and total variance explained after the addition of each block and the additional variance accounted for by the addition of each block. Secondly, the table contains the regression coefficients for each of the dependent variables when all variables were included in the analysis.

From the information about the variance accounted for by each block, it could be seen that school size accounted for very little of the variance in retention rates, net of the effect of the social environment. However, that conclusion needed to be qualified in two ways. First, it was possible that part of the reason for the difference found between metropolitan and non-metropolitan schools was due to the difference in

TABLE 1

Regression of Retention Rates from Year 11 to Year 12 on Social Environment, Enrolment, and Curriculum Variables

		1983 retention[a]					1982 retention				
Block	Independent variable	Metric coeff.	Stand. coeff.	Multi. corr(R)	Block var. (R^2)	Total var. R^2	Metric coeff.	Stand. coeff.	Multi. corr(R)	Block var. (R^2)	Total var. R^2
1	Socioeconomic level	0.92	0.37				0.85	0.38			
	Ethnicity	1.53	0.10				2.59	0.19			
	Location	8.51	0.25	.351	.123	.123	2.96	0.10	.366	.134	.134
2	School Size	0.00	-0.06	.356	.003	.126	0.01	0.10	.377	.008	.142
3	Group 2 subjects	2.44	0.17				2.66	0.13			
	Alternative course	19.71	0.31	.480	.105	.231	12.77	0.22	.439	.051	.193

[a] N = 266

their size. Secondly, the test was for linear relationships and it remains possible that there was a non-linear relationship between school size and retention rate which was not detected.

In addition the information about the variance accounted for by each block suggested that the curriculum accounted for a fair amount of the variance in retention rate. Information from the regression coefficients gave an indication of the size of this effect. In 1983 the offering of an alternative course at Year 12 appeared to be associated with a retention rate of a little under 20 percentage points higher than would be the case where other factors were the same but no alternative course to Group 1 was available. For 1982 the corresponding figure was 13 percentage points. In addition, each Group 2 subject which was offered was associated with a retention rate about 2.5 percentage points higher than would otherwise have been predicted. However, these are possible over-estimates of the effects of these curriculum factors because these alternative courses were mainly offered in metropolitan schools and were often associated with schools having a high percentage of students of non-English-speaking background, and in schools of lower than average socio-economic level.

To obtain alternative estimates of the size of the effect of curriculum factors on retention from Year 11 to Year 12 both the raw retention rates and the residual retention rates for schools of different curriculum structures were compared. The residual retention rate was the difference between the actual retention rate and that which would have been predicted from the social environment of the school alone. The reason for using it in addition to the unadjusted figures was that the effects of ethnicity and location on retention rate had been established for the years prior to the introduction of the new courses. Therefore, it seemed that statistical allowance for the influence of the social environment could be made before examining the effect of school factors. Results of these analyses for 1983 and 1982 have been shown in Table 2. On the basis of those data it seemed that, other things equal, schools which offered alternative courses had retention rates from Year 11 to Year 12 about 16 percentage points higher than the average for all high schools, and about 18 percentage points higher than for schools which offered only Group 1 subjects. In 1982, the corresponding figures were 9 percentage points and 11 percentage points respectively. For both 1983 and 1982, offering one or two Group 2 subjects resulted in a small increment in retention rate but offering three or more such subjects had a rather greater effect.

It should be stressed that these were 'on average' results and that there were examples of schools which were not recorded as offering either Approved Study Structures or Group 2 subjects which had high retention rates from Year 11 to Year 12 in 1983. Some of these schools could have been providing school courses which were not accredited, and some could have been providing a successful academic program which attracted and retained students. However, for 1983 overall, the effect size of the existence of an alternative program was about one standard deviation.

Whilst these results were perhaps surprising the notion that differences in school programs could be associated with differences in retentivity was consistent with other observations. First, across Victorian secondary schools as a whole enrolments in Group 2 subjects and Group 2 Approved Study Structures grew at a more rapid rate from 1982 to 1983 than did enrolments in Group 1 subjects, though it should be noted that the growth was from a lower base in the case of the Group 2 subjects and structures. Secondly, there appeared to have been a growth in a TAFE program intended to provide an equivalent to Year 12 in schools (the

TABLE 2

Table 2 Retention Rates from Year 11 to Year 12 for Schools with Different Types of Curriculum Structure

Curriculum structure	1983 retention rate (Year 11 → Year 12)		1982 retention rate (Year 11 → Year 12)	
	Unadjust. retent. rate	Residual retent. rate	Unadjust. retent. rate	Residual retent. rate
Group 1 subjects	55	-2.4	49	-1.6
One or two Group 2 subjects	58	0.5	54	2.4
Three or more Group 2 subjects	64	8.7	59	7.7
Alternative course	73	15.5	60	9.4
All schools	58	0.0	50	0.0
N	272	266	269	263

Tertiary Orientation Program) in the years up to and including 1982. Thirdly, there appeared to be differences between State school systems in retention rates from the beginning of secondary school to Year 11. South Australian and Victorian government schools had rather higher retention rates to Year 11 than the government schools of New South Wales, Queensland or Tasmania. These differences appeared to correspond to the extent to which Year 11 was perceived as part of a two-year program leading to tertiary education rather than as a part of a general education. At Year 12, where curricula were more similar the differences in retention rates between States were smaller.

Even though the general increase in retentivity between 1982 and 1983 in Victorian high schools and elsewhere might be largely attributed to declining job opportunities for youth, it seemed that school program differences contributed to the higher retention rates in some schools. It seemed unlikely that this effect was purely the result of differences in employment opportunities. Among the 16 schools studied in detail there were schools serving areas of similar employment characteristics. Often those schools had different retention rates and those differences appeared to be associated with differences in the programs of the schools.

Detailed Studies of Sixteen Schools

The general issues which appeared to be associated with differences in the retentivity of Victorian government high schools were investigated in greater detail in 16 selected schools. Thirteen of the 16 schools were selected on the basis of the difference between the actual and expected average retention rate from Year 10 to Year 12 over the period 1980 to 1982. The calculation of 'expected retention rate' took into account the influence of the location of the school, the socio-economic level of the school population, and the percentage of students from a non-English-speaking background. Three schools were included to broaden the range of

schools with high retention rates: one school had a traditional curriculum structure and academic orientation; another had an innovative structure, and was the only school of the sixteen to offer no HSC Group 1 subjects; the third school had shown a rapidly increasing retention rate in recent years. Of course there were some shifts between 1982 and 1983 retention rates, and one school could have been considered part of the high rather than the middle group on the basis of 1983 data.

During the course of the study, each school was visited between three and six times. Questionnaires were administered or sent to samples of students in Year 10 and Year 12, past students (Year 12 students of the previous year - 1982), parents and teachers. Interviews were held with principals, teachers and Year 10 students.

An examination of the curriculum and organisation of the seven high retention schools showed that they fell into two categories - one group comprised schools with an academic orientation and a record of success in public Higher School Certificate examinations, while the other group consisted of schools which offered an alternative curriculum at Year 12 as well as (with the exception of one school) HSC Group 1 subjects. The alternative programs were either the approved Schools Year 12 and Tertiary Entrance Course (STC), or a sufficient number of Group 1 subjects to constitute a course, or a school developed course. The existence of the schools with high retention rates and an academic orientation provides an important qualifier to the 'on average' data presented earlier.

Among the nine medium and low retention schools, there were four potential or actual 'turn-around' schools, schools that had exhibited marked increases in retention rates over the past two years which would, if sustained, lift them into a higher retention category. In all four schools, the rise in the retention of students had coincided with curriculum changes at Year 11 or Year 12.

In all the schools which offered an alternative Year 12 course, these innovations seem to have been associated with curriculum developments at lower year levels, which could be seen in greater diversity, more community-linked subjects, and teaching approaches that placed more emphasis on the development of student independence and student participation in course planning. Most of these schools had incorporated pastoral care structures into the organisation of the school to support the innovations in academic structure.

Students in Year 10 and Year 12

In the original formulation of the study it was suggested that the factors influencing students to remain at school could be considered in two groups. First, it was suggested that students would remain in school if they believed there were benefits in the long run in comparison with the available alternatives (i.e. schooling as a personal investment). Secondly, students would remain at school if they believed school was a satisfying place in terms of their immediate experience (i.e. schooling as an activity of intrinsic worth). Through the questionnaires, students were asked to indicate the importance of a number of factors in their decision to stay at school beyond Year 10 or to leave. For both year levels, the most important factors were those items that exemplified the personal investment value of schooling:

- 'I can do subjects that are useful to me'
- 'I do well in my school work'
- 'I need a pass at Year 12 for my future career'.

Of middle ranking in importance were those items linked to enjoyment of school and interest in school work - a view of schooling as being of intrinsic worth. The least important of the reasons for staying on at school were the influence of teachers and parents and the plans of friends.

In the 16 schools some of the characteristics of students and their schools which appeared to be associated with the intentions of students from Year 10 to remain at school until Year 12 were explored. The characteristics investigated were identified from other research studies as linked to student decisions to remain at schools or postulated by us as involved in a possible link between school factors and an intention to continue at school. A full description of the variables involved in the analysis has been provided in the main report (Ainley, Batten and Miller, 1984a). The results of the regression analyses which were conducted can be summarised as follows. Each of the statements carries the implied qualification: other things equal, with other things meaning the independent variables specified in the model.

Perceived ability. Student intentions to remain at school were related to their perceptions of their ability. Students who rated their ability higher were more inclined to intend to remain at school.

Home Background. Students of non-English-speaking background were a little more likely to intend to remain at school than their peers whose fathers were born in Australia. The association between socio-economic status and intention to remain at school was positive but small.

Quality of school life (Positive Affect). Students who perceived the quality of school life to be higher in terms of positive affect (school is an interesting enjoyable place) were more likely to remain at school. None of the non-school factors was linked to positive affect. [Other aspects of the Quality of School Life which were associated with an intention to remain at school were a sense of feeling successful in the work that was done, a belief that the work being done would be useful in the future, and a feeling that teachers were supportive and fair.]

School factors. There was a positive link between the average experience of teachers in the schools and the intention of Year 10 students to remain at school to Year 12. In schools where the average level of teacher experience was greater, students were more inclined to plan to do Year 12. Both the extent of co-ordination of the school program and the type of curriculum offered were associated with positive affect. Positive affect was higher in schools which were reported by teachers to have a more strongly co-ordinated program and in schools which had an alternative curriculum in Year 12. However, the overall effect on intentions was small since it was a transmitted rather than a direct effect.

Overall, the results suggested that students' perceptions of their ability and the quality of school life, in terms of positive affect were linked to their intentions to remain at school. School factors (related to organisation and curriculum emphasis) appeared linked to positive

affect, though, since the relation between the measured school factors and intention to remain at school was a transmitted effect, its total impact was small.

Discussions were held with Year 10 students about their present and anticipated experiences of schooling. Positive comments were made about careers education and work experience, and about practical electives such as consumer education, cooking and community studies. Students expressed apprehension at the thought of Year 12 because of the increased pressure, work-load and competition and because of the dependence on a single examination. Nevertheless, the Year was considered to be worth the effort involved because 'it can get you into the course you want', 'it gives you a better chance of getting a job'. In the schools which offered alternative curricula, students spoke positively about the content, teaching methods, and types of learning experiences to be found in those courses, although it was acknowledged that graduates of such courses were not well regarded by many employers or tertiary institutions. Even at the academically oriented schools, many students expressed a wish for a more broadly based curriculum in the senior years.

Former Students, Parents and Teachers

Previous studies in which student, teacher and parent opinion has been surveyed have found a high level of consensus in the view of these groups on the aims and roles of schools. These findings were confirmed by the present study. Parents, teachers and former students shared similar views on the role of schooling in Years 11 and 12. There was a slight variation in the response to items concerned with academic orientation and high performance standards, with teachers giving a lower rating to these items than did parents (the past students' rating fell between these two).

There was similar concordance among the three groups on the importance of various influences on students' decisions to stay at school or leave. As with the present students, the most important reasons were seen to be utility factors, the least important the influence of teachers, parents and friends, while enjoyment of school was a middle-rated factor. On two items (the influence of teachers and the availability of jobs), the rating given by past students was lower than that of the other two groups.

Former students from Year 12 were asked to indicate how well their last years at school had prepared them for their post-school lives. All students felt themselves to be best prepared in the skill areas which have been traditionally associated with post-compulsory schooling (such as basic skills, problem solving and study skills), but less well prepared in the broader functions of schooling concerned with career and community knowledge and self-development. While graduates from the alternative course and Group 1 courses related their preparation in traditional skill areas equally highly, there were differences in the views of the two groups about preparation in the broader aspects of schooling - specifically, experience of work, career and job knowledge, leisure activities, self-awareness, knowledge of government and community, and ability to work independently. In these areas, former students of the alternative program rated the adequacy of their school preparation better than did former students of Group 1 programs. Overall the differences in ratings were greater for females than for males.

An Interactive Perspective

The results of the study of retentivity of Victorian government high schools suggested that school factors might play some part in explaining differences in the retention rates between schools. However, taking into account other studies, it appeared inappropriate to attempt to seize on one factor as the main determinant of school retentivity, or of changes in retentivity. Rather, it seemed more appropriate to interpret developments in terms of an interactive framework. According to this perspective, job market factors and changing expectations would predispose young people to remain longer at school, but that predisposition would be more likely to be realised when the courses available were accessible and attractive to those young people. One of the most important challenges of the current decade is to understand better the ways in which students respond to different types of program in the senior secondary years, and the ways in which such programs contribute to the development of the capacity of the individual student.

FOOTNOTES

1. About 70 per cent of a cohort entering government secondary schools attend high schools with the remainder attending secondary technical schools.

2. There are several different types of elements within the Higher School Certificate (HSC) structure. Group 1 subjects are composed of a core (two thirds) and an optional (one third) selected from a set of accredited units. The core is prescribed by a subject committee appointed by the Victorian Institute of Secondary Education (VISE). Assessment of the core is based mainly on an external examination (at least five sevenths) and partly on school assessments. Assessment on the optional unit is school based but moderated. Group 2 subjects have been accredited by VISE but the assessment of student performance is the responsibility of the school at which the student is enrolled. Group 2 Approved Study Structures are whole courses (either integrated courses, or selections of subjects) accredited by VISE in which the assessment of student performance is the responsibility of the school.

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ARE GIRLS 'YOUTH'?

*by S.N. Sampson**

Nowhere is the masculine bias of the English language - and therefore its connotations, the images, expectations, and activities implied - more apparent than in the increasing use of the word 'youth' to refer to the needs of young people, girls included. 'Youth' defined by the dictionaries refers to a young person, especially a young man. Even in 1984, it still requires purposeful effort and 'talking up', in almost every activity, to ensure that girls are envisaged when action is planned for youth, that their needs are met as well as those of boys and that they will benefit equally with our young men.

I believe that this is because the most powerful images of our youth planners and decision-makers are themselves at a young age - and they are almost entirely male - that is, they plan for boys. It is also because what needs to be planned for the future of girls is still not as widely understood as it is for boys. Most of us, of either sex, who are at decision-making age in Australia had a mother who was basically centred on the home. In our heads there are few powerful memories and images of multitudes of women participating in and contributing to society at large in the myriad visible ways that men are seen to have done. Therefore those of us who are the decision-makers do not have clearly in view a picture of the future for the young women who are half of the population for which we have planned and designed schooling or Transition Education or the Participation and Equity Programs, etc. Worse, perhaps, each of us has a very clear picture of our own mothers, whose life and interests, though powerful and important to each of us, were restricted in societal terms. Memories of a generation whose opportunities for education and vocation were so limited in their youth, whose family-centred years were a so much greater proportion of life span, are likely to prevent us providing the necessary open and inviting pathways for youth who are young girls today.

I have explained at some length what I perceive to be the reasons for the status quo in the education of girls, because otherwise it is very difficult to understand why there is so very little change in many of their problems, some identified over a decade ago. The majority of girls are still making sex stereotyped subject and, hence, career choices in our schools; they are still avoiding wherever possible the physical sciences (except Biology), higher level mathematics, the skilled trades, highly technical and computer studies. Given a choice of activity, girls still flock like lemmings towards female stereotyped occupations, particularly those such as low level office work, retail sales and manufacturing where employment is declining most rapidly. They are still choosing these directions quite voluntarily, firstly because they have a subjective belief about the proper roles for adult women which they have learned from

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interacting with us, their elders, and secondly because schools and special Commonwealth programs such as Transition Education and PEP have simply not addressed the issue of persuading them not to choose such narrow options, except in the most peripheral and piecemeal fashion.

A recent report of the Commonwealth Schools Commission on the education of girls entitled Girls and Tomorrow: The Challenge for Schools (1984) highlights the problems associated with the role of the school in catering for youth who are girls. It describes how girls' self-esteem and aspirations are profoundly affected by processes within the school which reflect different standards for and expectations of girls compared with boys, the timetabling of subjects in ways which limit girls' subject choices, the allocation of students to subjects and levels on the basis of their gender, the structure of schooling which relegates women to the bottom of the hierarchy of power and influence.

In an overview of Transition and earlier programs designed to expand girls' career options (undertaken by this author, Sampson, 1983), the same conclusions were reached regarding the continuing provision of limited stereotyped activities for girls. For example, money was spent providing typing and low level office skills when the vast majority of the young female unemployed were seeking clerical work. Those programs which incorporated certain male-stereotyped studies (accountancy, legal studies, etc.) and skills with new office technology were more successful. Again, school advisory services were not being at all effective in persuading girls to choose non-female stereotyped forms of training and work; it was the humiliating experience of unemployment for several months which led many young women to change direction towards technical studies or apprenticeships. Why are schools still making these ineffective responses to the problems clearly being faced by youth who are girls?

The curriculum has been described in Girls and Tomorrow as a further stumbling block for young women, by reason of its sexist assumptions about the social and economic roles of women, and its inability to build self-esteem and a sense of physical competence for them as it does for young men. Most schools, whilst paying lip service to equal opportunity by opening stereotyped skills studies to both sexes at the lowest secondary levels, still accept sex-segregated classes in technical or business studies and others in later years and rarely insist on a range of skill studies to equip both sexes for all aspects of life, including work, leisure and family life. Physical activities for girls, and human relationships studies for both sexes are casualties of this lack of conviction and purposeful planning for equal outcomes for all youth which can be observed in schools and special programs alike. We have known for many years that the curriculum constructs a sexist view of reality, that much of what we teach is dysfunctional for young women once they leave school. Why has it taken us so long and so many reports and still no real improvement is effected for youth who are girls?

Recent research both in Australia and elsewhere has highlighted the crucial role played by the teacher, whether male or female, in the process of building girls' view of themselves and the role of women in society. Whereas the structure and organisation of schooling, and the curriculum have long been known to influence the self-esteem, subjective view of social reality for women and aspirations and achievements of girls, detailed information about the different impact on each sex of teacher/pupil interaction has only recently been understood. Variations of teacher attention towards each sex which dramatically favour boys, the

effects of praise and blame for academic errors compared to those of presentation or diligence, which leads to learned helplessness in girls; the effects of different questioning behaviour towards boys which helps to develop their problem-solving skills; these and other consequences of teacher behaviour towards each sex are only now being fully understood. If past history is any guide, it could well be our present pupils' children who will benefit from this new and greater understanding of the hidden curriculum of schooling for girls.

The report Girls and Tomorrow gives a detailed account of some of the findings of the Australian studies in the areas of schooling to which I have referred in this article, as well as the consequences in terms of girls' disadvantage. Since its publication earlier this year a report on the participation of girls in the CYSS project has provided further evidence of the one-sided view of 'youth' to which I have alluded (Byrne, 1984). Despite the best efforts of small groups of women in equal opportunity offices in each State, the comparatively generous funding for Participation and Equity programs is likely to be spent in the same sexist fashion as it is in schools, in Transition Education and other system initiatives. What are the newly appointed, widely dispersed regional PEP consultants likely to know about girls' needs when schools themselves do not provide a lead? Neither schools, nor systems, nor any Commonwealth program so far initiated has made the issue of equity for girls a mainstream, continuing, planned project (as distinct from a pious, general 'fairy wish'). For this reason, Girls and Tomorrow points out that little real change has been effected since the last Schools Commission document on the subject of girls' education - Girls, School and Society, 1975.

The education of girls is a difficult issue with which to grapple; solutions are likely to require a much greater degree of self-awareness and consciousness of outcomes than that to which teachers are now accustomed. Nevertheless the wastage of talent and the increasing burdens of the dependence of women and the numbers of unemployed mean that the solution to these problems, gradual as they may be, must begin to be addressed in order to preserve the cohesiveness and well-being of Australian society. Programs to assist youth, whether in schools or out, must address girls' and women's difficulties as well as those of boys.

Girls and Tomorrow makes an urgent plea for a national policy on the education of girls. It also makes a series of specific recommendations with regard to school organisation, curriculum and teachers' role, directed towards action by Commonwealth States and schools, with appropriate timetables for the achievement of goals and objectives. Obviously, much more action research needs to be undertaken and publicised in systems of all kinds which work with youth. At the root of such action, implicit in the implementation of recommendations, however, is a willingness to understand why we have achieved so little for girls, in societal terms, and personal and system acceptance by teachers and other personnel concerned with youth, of responsibility for easing the disadvantages currently being experienced by youth who are girls.

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THE CULTURE OF OUR HIGH SCHOOLS AND ITS IMPACT ON GIRLS*

*by Margaret Vickers***

Recently, a challenging argument has emerged from the girls and schooling debate. It asserts that co-education is working better for boys than for girls. It suggests that girls are disempowered by the co-educational system, because it recreates inside the school the 'normal' social environment which functions outside the school. Dale Spender, a well-known proponent of this view, argues that male superiority is replicated within the co-educational system. She claims that in the presence of girls, boys from the earliest age have someone to be superior to, and that teachers are often more than willing to reinforce this division and inequality. These are serious claims. They cast doubt on the validity of one of the major institutional reforms of recent years. They imply that the social advantages of rubbing shoulders with people of both genders from all walks of life may be outweighed by power structures which are militating against hopes of equity for girls. In this article I discuss these claims and draw attention to certain problems with the evidence that supports them. In particular, I argue that the debate has been couched in simplistic terms which deny the complexity and diversity of girls' responses to the co-educational setting.

A brief review of current statistics shows that in some ways girls have made significant gains in the last decade:

- in 1976 the Schools Commission report Girls, School and Society showed that at every level of social class girls received less education than did boys
- the latest figures (CTEC, 1982; DEYA, 1983) show that a higher proportion of girls than boys now continue in secondary school to Year 12 and that, on overall figures, full-time participation in post-compulsory education is greater for women than for men aged 17 to 21.

Despite these auspicious changes, girls and boys continue to follow diverging pathways at the upper secondary and tertiary levels. Women are still twice as likely as men to be in liberal studies of some kind within higher education and less than half as likely to be in the science/engineering/technology areas (Anderson and Vervoorn, 1983). This clearly constitutes a disadvantage, since it underpins patterns of occupational segregation which in turn partly explain the lower average earnings of women than of men.

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* *With minor modifications, this is the text of a paper presented at the ANZAAS Conference in Canberra, May 1984 (84/AB: 261).*

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The high overall participation rate for women in tertiary education does not apply to university and TAFE enrolments. Only 6 per cent of apprenticeships go to girls: this perpetuates the male monopoly of the trade and industrial workforce. In relation to university enrolments it appears that qualified girls are less likely than boys to take up an offer of a place, and thus females are still a minority of the undergraduate population (Firkin, 1983).

These are depressingly familiar facts: depressing, because distorted patterns of subject choice persist in spite of the significant efforts that have been made to eliminate difference in curriculum offerings for both girls and boys at primary and secondary levels and to broaden the career options of girls. Yet on second thoughts, the failure to achieve equality of outcomes through the mere provision of equal opportunities is hardly surprising. Differences in educational choices and career pathways are merely the 'surface structure' of inequality. Its 'deep structure' concerns the way femininity itself is defined and realised, through inadvertent as well as deliberate rewards and punishments, through media images, and through adult examples. Taken-for-granted assumptions about sex differences are deeply internalised by many teachers and students and these permeate interactions between people in school, as in society at large.

In a recent paper entitled 'Schooling and Injustice for Girls', Jean Blackburn argued that it is sex **differences** rather than sex roles which have been the target of most action, and that our focus must be shifted away from the relatively innocuous dimension of 'difference' to the more difficult and heavily contested area of sex role socialisation.

> The meaning attached to being female or male in a particular time and place is socially learned. That meaning is called 'gender' to distinguish it from the biological fact of sex. It relates to the kinds of behaviour, social roles and activities considered appropriate for people of a given sex. Schools clearly play an important part in the construction of gender appropriate ways of confronting the world and of defining oneself as a member of a gender category.

It is not difficult to identify aspects of the culture of our high schools which reinforce passivity, dependence and restricted ambition among girls, and which confirm male dominance and female inferiority. First, very few women occupy senior positions in schools, or in the bureaucratic hierarchies of the education systems. Forty-six per cent of secondary school teachers in Australia are women, but fewer than 10 per cent of our State secondary schools have female principals (Connell et al, 1982).

Second, decisions about what is taught and to whom it is taught help to create and maintain distinct sex-role cultures in our schools. Shirley Sampson (1981) listed some elements of this process: physical education classes stress vigour, decisiveness and competition for boys, tentativeness and co-operation for girls; arguments about sex-specific disability are used to justify remedial assistance for boys in reading, but not for girls in maths-science; the development of personal sensibilities, feeling and emotion is encouraged among girls but not among boys, and so on. Perhaps more importantly, the fact that men have dominated the 'knowledge industry' for so long means that the kinds of questions asked and the

kinds of problems selected for attention reflect men's perspectives and by and large exclude women's experiences and their responses to and reflections upon it.

The third and most recently developed line of research is one which focuses on the power structure of classrooms. It is this research which is most directly questioning the value of the co-educational system. Its main focus is on the style, content and frequency of teacher interactions with girls and boys in mixed-sex classrooms. Two American studies (Fennema, 1980; Becker, 1981) have shown that boys are given more assistance and encouragement than girls in mathematics classes, and that this is equally true when the teacher is female. Working in English schools, Spender and others (1980) have reported that in co-educational classes boys demand and get a disproportionate share of teachers' attention, of class discussion time and even of physical space.

Findings such as these, taken together with gross comparisons of the achievements of girls in single-sex as against co-educational schools, are creating a popular impression that the single-sex option must be better for girls. There is of course no simple answer to the question of whether single-sex schools are better for girls than co-educational schools. For one thing, it is impossible to separately examine the effects of school type and the social composition of the population recruited by schools. It is vacuous to find in favour of girls' schools by comparing moderate or high fee private schools with co-educational schools in working class suburbs.

The institutional effects of schooling are not simple or automatic. Even schools serving similar populations may differ significantly from each other in terms of staff organisation, curriculum content and strategy, and the pattern of peer group life. In Making the Difference, Connell and his co-authors argued that ruling class kids and working class kids are not in fact processed by schooling with predictable outcomes. Rather, the reproduction of class inequality through the education system is achieved through practices, and it is these practices which must be studied in detail if we are to understand how class relations and gender relations are reconstituted in each generation.

What I want to concentrate on in the remainder of this paper is one aspect of this process of reconstitution, and that is, the way in which gender relations are recreated through the informal life of the peer group. To illustrate the process, I shall outline in some detail the results of a case study of the way relational patterns developed over three consecutive years in one classroom group in a Victorian country town high school. The advantage of a case study is that one can be sure that it happened at least once; but with this case I am confident that it represents a quite common pattern of interaction, since the instance I am reporting was just one of a rather large pool of co-educational classrooms that were studied in a similar way.

This class was chosen for detailed analysis because of its stability; seventeen of its twenty-two pupils had been in the class since the first year (7X) and had maintained a stable core throughout the three-year study period. When the thirty boys and girls allocated to Form 7X first came together, only nine of them knew each other, and only two had been friends at primary school. Yet by the end of that year almost all of them had formed the associations that were going to see them through the next three years.

Three cohesive and popular friendship groups emerged: two girls' groups and one boys' group. Excluded from these were three collections of rejected pupils who appeared to be spuriously bonded but who in fact expressed few choices for one another, preferring instead to muck around with the popular kids whenever they could. The most popular girls in the class - Leonie, Leanne, Linda and Karen - were mostly from the district's farming families. These girls were courteous, friendly and hardworking and their popularity in 7X reflected the generally positive tone of the class in its first year. But by Year 9 this group of conformists had largely lost their special prominence in favour of the 'spunky' girls and boys who were far more interested in mucking around and stirring than in conventional values of competition and achievement.

These spunky girls - Dianne, Carol, Julia and Mary - comprised the other group of popular girls in 7X. Through the first year they maintained a rather low profile, but as the class became more obstructive in the second year their influence increased. By third year the values and perceptions of these articulate girls were central to the informal culture of the class group, and defined its major features: restricted ambition and resistance to authority.

In contrast with these two groups of popular girls who clearly enjoyed each other, the rejected girls were often quarrelling and falling out. Yet there was an illusion of stability in their relations with each other, since their re-combinations all had to occur within the boundaries of the rejected grouping. In fact, the consistency with which these rejected girls continued to be excluded from the popular groups was one of the most alarming features of the relational pattern over the three consecutive years.

Social structure among the boys entailed a simple two-way split: popular boys and rejects. For most purposes the popular boys formed one large coalition. These nine boys played football and cricket together at lunchtimes and in class their achievements ranged from satisfactory to very good. In contrast, the rejected boys were mostly seen as failures. Greg and Michael were teased to such a point of misery that they were removed to a special class at the end of the year. The other three showed no solidarity. They hung around hoping to be invited into the popular boys' group and only associated with each other because they had no alternative. In Year 8, this group was augmented by a collection of hard core resisters. Patrick and Wayne entered 8X as students repeating the year and Barry was transferred from another class where he had been troublesome. Peter, who came from the same township as these boys, joined up wtih them on the basis of common local interests.

By the beginning of Year 9, classroom dynamics revolved around these five social groups: the spunky girls and their friends, the boys who stir; the conformists; the resisters and a small, marginal group of girls - the retreaters. It is useful to look at how the three distinctive girls' groups were defined, and even more instructive to look at the diffeences between these and the boys' groups, and the patterns of interaction that arose among them.

Spender's work has indicated some ways in which the power structures of classrooms impinge on girls, but in looking at these power structures she has mainly focused on the teachers - what expectations they have, whom they give most attention and help to, and how they distribute rewards and punishments. What this perspective does not explain is how and why different responses to imposed gender stereotypes arise. It does not recognise the fact that many (if not most) girls contest the passive and

marginal role accorded them, and fight to construct new ways of defining themselves in sexual terms as well as in terms of school related roles such as achievement, and conformity or resistance to authority.

Within 9X, three distinctive constructions were achieved by the girls - the conformists, the spunks, and the retreaters. I shall discuss each in turn, and contrast them with the most nearly equivalent group of boys. The spunky girls had a well developed sense of the distinction between the formal and informal power structures of the classroom. They disparaged students who complied with the school's authority; in comparing her own friends with the conformers, Mary, who was the conspicuous leader of 'the spunks', said:

> Dianne's different from the other two. She's a good kid. She mucks around. Linda and Leanne are goody-goodies that I don't like.

And comparing two of the popular boys with Stephen, whom she rejected:

> Stephen's a dead prawn - he thinks he's smart and he always answers questions in class. Geoffrey and Russell are more alike in personality because they're nice to talk to - you know, they sort of don't try to show that they're brainy.

Crucially, these girls both rejected and felt superior to those who conformed to the official idea of schooling. School is mostly about having fun with other kids, including the boys; it was in the area of sexual relations that they felt especially superior to the conformers. Most of the boys, when asked which group of girls they would prefer to work with, said they would rather Mary's group because 'they're more fun to be with'. One boy was most concise:

> Those girls (the conformers) get on with their work more, but Mary and her lot get on with the boys.

The conformers would participate in serious class discussions, confidently making useful contributions, whilst the spunky girls would deliberately give silly and sometimes amusing answers. For them, more than for the boys, it was essential not to show that they were 'brainy'. Publicly, these girls refused to accept passive, subordinate roles. This does not mean that they were feminists or that they contested the inferior position of women in the social structure. Their rebellion is not against male dominance, but against the conventional authority of the school as it impinges on their daily lives. It was a double bind. Despite the bravado, they all acknowledged that doing well at school really mattered. Their performance was about average - it could have been better. But the laid-back style - restricted ambition and not trying too hard - was, on their construction, essential to what mattered most - getting on with the boys.

The spunky boys group largely shared this framework, but differed in one critical respect. Like the girls, they accepted 'mucking around', as a way of life in Form 9X. Most of them would quickly get the work set for a lesson period out of the way and then talk, joke and 'stir the teachers'. But Stephen - the 'dead prawn' referred to earlier - was not criticised by the boys for 'showing he was brainy', since intelligent contributions coming from boys were viewed in a positive light. In this way they differed from Mary's group, who consistently denigrated any show of enthusiasm for intellectual work.

The conformers have already been discussed in passing. They had been the 'golden girls' from the beginning, and throughout the years they continued to be diligent and well-behaved. They sought to do well - had high ambitions - and deliberately fought against the dominant ethos of the class. And whereas only two of them had gained high ranking for being 'best at work' in 7X, by the third year all four were rated within the best quarter of the class. All four came from respected local families that set high standards for themselves and their children and took a keen interest in the school. These girls had an unusual sense of security and detachment. For example, Karen described her own friends as independent people who 'like to do things their own way', in contrast with the noisier boys who are 'just followers' who go around in groups. Unlike most of their classmates these girls were compassionate and fair: they did not employ scathing nicknames or describe other pupils as 'dumb and stupid'. They had nothing to prove and their exclusion from the form's 'in group' did not seem to disturb them. To my knowledge, they all completed a successful HSC year and moved into the various tertiary courses they had chosen.

It follows from the fact of competitive assessment that there will be, in every classroom, a collection of young people who are marked out as failures by the public nature of our evaluation systems. In 9X there were four boys and two girls in this category. Their reactions to the positions they were in were, however, entirely different. The four boys who formed the resisters' group were in fact the only kids in the class who made it clear that they hated coming to school. Like everyone else, they mucked around, but these boys didn't know when to stop. They raged against the system. They did everything they could think of to avoid settling down to work. They were time-servers who obviously would not be hanging around at school once they reached the leaving age.

The girls' reaction was predictably different. In their second year in the school, Christine and Robyn had been part of a larger group. Their other friends had failed Year 8 and had been kept down to repeat the year. These two, a fragile and isolated remnant of the original group, had been promoted to Year 9. They were the butt of classroom jokes. In the argot of the dominant group, these were the 'blur blops'. Over half the boys had named them on a questionnaire form:

Q. What do you like least about your form?
A. The blur-blops.

It was a shared joke which the boys discussed quite openly. 'The best thing', one boy added, 'is that there's only two of them left now. Last year there were five, but three of them flunked'. Robyn's answers to the classroom questionnaire left no doubt that the taunts were reaching their target:

What do you like most about your form?
Nothing.
What do you like least about your form?
The boys and girls that stir.

Christine's answers were in a similar vein.

Both girls talked in a way that reflected their sense of aimlessness and isolation. In talking to you, Robyn's voice never rose above a whisper and she did not meet your eyes. Some questions were simply

followed by a long silence. These girls were in fact only two of a much larger group within this school, who, because of their timidity and unobtrusiveness, were receiving far less than their fair share of attention from teachers. The most common reaction of teachers, when asked to comment on girls like this is, 'What them? They're no trouble at all!'

Owing to the dedication and energy of a small number of teachers in this particular school, a special program was established for pupils of this sort - predominantly girls - who were handling failure by withdrawing into marginality and aimlessness. The results of providing a secure and ordered environment for these young people were dramatic, illustrating in my view a need for substantial curriculum development in this direction. The discrepancy between the amount of energy allocated to dealing with male delinquency and the virtual absence of attention to, or assistance for, girls who are unobtrusive and suppressed provides further support for Spender's view that in co-educational schools boys absorb far more than their fair share of the school's resources.

What I have tried to do in presenting this account is to illustrate how socially structured differences among girls arise from their different responses to the experience of schooling, and to emphasise the difficulty of generalising about them as a homogeneous group. It has been suggested that both girls and boys play an active part in their own gender construction,and that this process gives rise to new patterns of relationships between them. In the context of the group we have been looking at, three distinct models of femininity had emerged - some of them more acceptable than others. As Kessler et al. pointed out, in Ockers and Discomaniacs, constructions of masculinity and femininity have changed significantly over time; the roles of men and women are now more open, and may be defined acceptably in a variety of ways. In terms of curriculum practice, the question becomes one of identifying the constructions which exist within a group, encouraging the group to consider a wider range of socially sanctioned models, and seeking ways of endorsing the more acceptable constructions among those that are available.

It is also clear that there are situations in which timid and unobtrusive young people would get a better go if they were taught in separate groups. Failure to counter the effects of boisterous and disruptive behaviour - which is often accepted as 'natural' for boys - leads to situations in which many young people, particularly girls, are denied equal access to learning and equal opportunities to develop a sense of confidence and ease.

Finally, whilst the attempts that are now being made to raise and broaden girls' aspirations and promote their entry to professional and technical careers and trades are important, they also have their limitations and dangers. Essentially, these attempts mean encouraging girls to succeed within competitive structures whose narrow emphasis on assessment and preparation for tertiary study have been extensively criticised. To further accentuate competition and hierarchy would now be counterproductive for the majority of students of both sexes and for society. It would, in conclusion, run counter to the reforms that are needed if our schools are to become inclusive institutions which cater at all stages more adequately for the needs of the full range of students.

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N.B. See also Abstracts 44/AB: 259-261

SCHOOL AND WORK: SOME TEACHER AND STUDENT PERSPECTIVES

*by Lyle Munro**

This paper is based on a Litt.B. thesis in Sociology (ANU, 1983) entitled 'Schooling, Part-time Work and the Occupational Destinations of Senior Secondary Students in Canberra' (84/AB: 247). The study of student initiated work experience in the part-time job market has been practically ignored by Australian researchers and it was for this reason that the thesis was written. By focusing on one ACT secondary college it was possible to explore the increasing importance of the part-time job as a 'half-way house' between school and the 'world of work' for 17 and 18 year olds in their last two years of schooling (Years 11 and 12). An ethnographic format based on participant and non-participant observations (structured interviews) was used to portray the two cultures as experienced by teachers and students. The study notes that whereas school and work are typically analysed as separate social institutions, students with part-time jobs (about 65 per cent of college students) experience school and work concurrently and are confronted with contrasting definitions of what constitutes social competence.

By holding down a part-time job, these two dozen students in the sample have already made the transition to work without the support of the College. They have learned what it is like to work for money, normally in dead-end jobs, the difference between job satisfaction and work experience and how work is about 'daily meaning' as well as 'daily bread'. They have experienced the conflicting expectations of a cognitive-based education system and the largely non-cognitive 'personality market' of the sales world. For many students, education like work, has come to mean earning (grades, money) rather than learning.

Making the Grade

At College, with its emphasis on assessment, the relationship between teacher and student is a contractual one in which students must produce pieces of work for assessment, meet deadlines for assignments, attend class punctually and perform according to objectives prescribed by the teacher. According to Becker *et al.* these work attitudes are necessary for 'Making the Grade':

> To do well in college, one must have the qualities students attribute to adults: the ability to manage time and effort efficiently and wisely, to meet responsibilities to other people and to the organisations one belongs to, and to cope successfully with the work one is assigned (Becker *et al.* 1968: 31).

For some students part-time work provides the opportunity for the development of these skills in a non-academic setting. Mac's experience suggests how work outside the College can give students a sense of competence not found in school work. His job on the milkrun takes up a couple of hours every week night. More important than the money he earns is the chance to do something:

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> It gives me something to do ... to pass the time so you don't get bored ... [later in the interview]: during the evenings I'm bored, restless, don't know what to do.

Here is a boy who would rather be at work than at school. Although College is an improvement on high school - 'You're trusted more' - it has little to offer in comparison with the milkrun:

> I've got a big responsibility ... he [the boss] trusts me a lot: I know all the customers by name, it's a big responsibility, remembering all the orders.

On this milkrun, there are more than 100 customers and Mac explained that all deliveries are made from memory; for example, Mrs X gets two bottles on Wednesday, only one on Friday and so on. He gets personal satisfaction in being able to do the job without a 'street map'; it's given him confidence - 'I used to be pretty shy'. Dealing with people, knowing he's succeeding makes the job worthwhile.

Mac's performance at College is another matter. As one of the bottom five 'academic achievers' in the sample, he has achieved little success in any of his courses (English, Mathematics, Typing, Motor Technology - majors; History, Workshop Practice - minors). Even in what he thinks is his best subject (Motor Technology), his course score is a low 38 (mean 65). Comments by teachers in his written reports focus on his lack of academic skills:

> Mac needs to put more effort into the written side of the unit (Applied Motor Technology). His assignments and test work are the weak area of his assessment. (Grade D).

In other reports there are references to:

> ... failure to complete written assignments - not taking the course seriously - poor performance in examinations - difficulty with concepts - need for more application ...

Mac is a boy for whom academic school work has little meaning. His attitude is interpreted by some of his teachers as 'cavalier' and this is understood to be the basis for his poor academic performance. It is not the work itself, but a lack of academic competence that the teachers see as the problem. Yet Mac is not lacking in application or understanding when it comes to performing his milkrun duties. For students like Mac, the scholastic culture offers little opportunity for success or satisfaction; for teachers, work is schoolwork and this means students must cope with the academic work they are assigned.

A final point about Mac's job. Working on a milkrun is one of those jobs labelled dead-end (see, for example, the interview by Paul Willis in Learning to Labour, p.69-70); but to a student who is not achieving at school it can be much more. Musgrove (1968: 122-23) has argued for example that such jobs '... give a sense of usefulness and importance to the concerns of the grown-up world'.

The importance of having a part-time job was vividly put by Wilma, a student with a good scholastic record:

> It helps you become more accepted by the community too, cause there's still that image around if you haven't got a job if your 17 or 18 - then what's up with you? That's the way it is in our circle of friends anyway. Everyone in our group's got a job. Those who haven't keep quiet whenever it's brought up ... same with cars, if you haven't got your licence - there's a lot of pressure - (Wilma - Hamburger Heaven).

Like the 'check-out chicks', sales assistants, babysitters and garage attendants, Wilma knows that 'hopping in Hamburger Heaven' is a short-term necessity to be endured for the money and feeling of independence the job provides.

School and Work

Windschuttle has pointed out that the growth in teenage employment in recent years has been confined largely to the retail/wholesale trade and the fast food sector. 'These jobs have been characterised by low pay and casual, part-time employment ... In other words, they are dead-end, ephemeral jobs suitable perhaps for earning pocket money while at school, but no substitute for the long-term prospects and training that once was part of teenage employment' (Windschuttle, 1983: 14).

Students have learned this during their exposure to bad jobs as part-time workers; they also know that the limited number of good jobs goes to those with post-secondary qualifications. They are therefore compelled to strive for more credentials, often beyond their intellectual capabilities, because most of the jobs available to them are below their mental capacities. There is no place in-between dead-end work and further education, or put simply, there is very little suitable work after Year 12. Of the two dozen student workers in the sample, all of the top academic twelve are continuing their education at tertiary level while in the bottom twelve only half are working - two in part-time jobs and two in temporary jobs. The evidence from this study also suggests that teenagers are staying on at school, not for education in its own right, but for better long-term job prospects. There is nothing new about seeing education as a job-ticket; despite the rhetoric of educational aims, education is perceived by students in largely instrumental terms. Douse made the same point in his survey of 300 fifth-form part-time workers: '... what pupils gain from schools is seen as at best relevant to gaining career entry' (Douse, 1975: 131). It is earning, not learning, that is the motivational basis for staying on at College. Students in the sample appeared to develop a mercenary attitude to their subjects not unlike the 'fetishism of the wage packet' which corresponds to the grades and other rewards for performance of work done at school. To paraphrase Willis (1977: 133): It does not matter what subject is studied since it is the grade which is really being made. There is no inherent interest, therefore, in the intrinsic rewards of an education, only in the profit to be made from its production and exchange.

Parkin (1978: 65) distinguishes between selective and non-selective systems of education by suggesting that the latter prepares students less well psychologically for menial positions in the job market. In selective systems - for example, in Britain or Germany - students know where they stand and are more likely to expect low-status jobs when they leave, whereas in more egalitarian systems like Australia or the United States, the degree of anticipatory adjustment is markedly reduced. In non-selective systems therefore, the low achievers are more likely to feel cheated, having been admitted in the first place to 'higher learning' in the expectation that this will provide access to better jobs. There was little evidence of this kind of reaction amongst the College students in

the sample, all of whom have been psychologically prepared to distinguish between good jobs and bad jobs and to grasp the links between these and educational credentials. Staying on at College and getting work experience at the same time provides this awareness; it is an insight into the 'world of work' that makes the College, and further education or training, a more attractive alternative than work in a dead-end job.

With the possible exception of Mac, all of the 24 students were emphatic about not continuing their part-time jobs on a full-time basis. This remark from a shop assistant and aspiring teacher is typical:

> At school you're working towards something else while at work there's nowhere else you can go. I really hate it ... I never want to be a shop-assistant!

Part-time work in dead-end jobs heightens the future career aspirations of College students:

> [The part-time job] made me realise that I need something more challenging for myself in a full-time career (girl shop assistant).

Part-time work experience helps the student to clarify the roles of student and worker; being a student at a College or a tertiary institution carries more status than being a worker in some meaningless job. The part-time job is not perceived as real work by students, nor does it offer the career prospects of a conventional good job or indeed of further education. What the experience of part-time work does provide for students still at school is an insight into the value of education (credentialism) as a means to an end, rather than an end in itself. That is, education has worth only in so far as it offers a refuge from dead-end work or unemployment but once a good job becomes available, a student is likely to forego further education. Thus the jobs in the retail and fast food industries (the majority) are seen as bad jobs in which there is no future; the good jobs are those that offer some opportunity for learning or developing skills (the minority in childcare or coaching jobs).It is in the latter that there is also the possibility for practice to be linked with theory, where the school can effectively guide a student's early career orientation, for example, in the case of Donna's interest in teaching:

> 'I think I'm going to be a good teacher' she says confidently and this is reinforced in reports from her supervising teacher:
>
> > It seems that you have made a decision in the light of your experience this term, which will affect your whole life ... you have already gained so much valuable experience by having this opportunity to see how children learn ...

Donna's work experience was part of a Community Involvement unit which does not count towards tertiary entrance. The value comes from the experience and confidence she derives in preparing her for a future career.

In the example of a semi-skilled job which builds confidence and offers a sense of achievement to lower achievers, such as Mac's experiences on the milkrun, there is also a potential role for the College. This represents a challenge to teachers as educators; it is concerned with the definitions of 'social competence' which students like

Mac internalise during their socialisation at school and at work. Socialisation is defined here as what the individual learns from significant others (such as teachers, workmates, bosses) and internalises as 'social competence'. '... This internalised view of both the social reality and of self has enormous power to shape the individual, his aspirations and expectations' (Wright et al. 1978: 105). In Mac's case there was a contradiction in what the College was saying about his performance (confidence) and what he was experiencing at work. Had the College been able to integrate Mac's practical experience on the job with the educational aspects of that experience (such as dealing with people, structuring time, keeping accounts, etc.) there would be no contradiction or conflict in his concurrent roles as student and worker. Mac would not need to feel that school is waste of time, that learning is abstract and pointless.

For the high achievers in the sample, the College has successfully inculcated the values of academic achievement. To these students, learning is still abstract but it is neither a waste of time nor pointless since it is really what education can be used for (credentialism) that is transmitted. Thus what purports to be a College 'education' is really the transmission of a scholastic culture that sorts and ranks students for particular roles in the occupation structure. Informally, College teachers often confess that assessment has made a charade of teaching and learning, and that they might as well rank students using an achievement test like ASAT without the ritual and paraphernalia of pedagogy and curricula. In short, as educators they are aware of the injustices of an assessment system based on scholastic achievement alone. but as teachers they have little choice but to collaborate:

> Please keep in mind that our system of assessment is concerned with certain forms of assessable work, not with potential (Teacher report).

Conclusion

Thus the College sees and evaluates achievement within a very narrow teacher-pupil context where work is schoolwork, and where a student's potential in other contexts (such as in the workplace) is either unknown or considered irrelevant. Part-time work experience, for example, was mentioned in only two written references as a factor in the students' favour. More revealing however, is the fact that only two of the 12 students in the bottom half of the academic rank order list obtained a College reference; in the top half, only two students did not. This suggests that only those with a good academic record feel confident enough to seek a reference. The College reference serves to promote the marketability of the student in terms of 'interactive competence, physical attractiveness and intelligence', labels which help shape their self-perceptions and future career orientations. As a result of the pressures of credentialism and their own academic socialisation teachers tend to respond best to the minority of higher achievers like Donna and least of all to the majority like Mac.

Teachers also respond more favourably to school sponsored work experience programs while student-initiated casual work is barely noticed. As a contribution to the School to Work Transition debate, the present study advocates a role for teachers in the early work socialisation of students along the lines suggested by the Schools Commission (Schooling for 15 and 16 Year Olds, 1980). In their own work careers, they have

experienced the conditions and rewards of paid work, success and failure, the pressures of hierarchy and credentialism, subordination, decision-making and trade union involvement - all of which are pertinent to a student's understanding of his or her initiation into the 'world of work' by means of casual, part-time work.

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BOOK REVIEW

DWYER, Peter, Bruce **WILSON** and Roger **WOOCK**. Confronting School and Work. Sydney, NSW: Allen and Unwin, 1984 [175p.: $10.95] (84/AB:?23)

*by Susan E. King**

In some ways, Confronting School and Work may be disadvantaged by having been published only two years after Connell, Ashenden, Kessler and Dowsett's Making the Difference (B99). Commonalities between the two books seem to invite their comparison and, in this reviewer's opinion, Making the Difference is the more impressive book.

Dwyer, Wilson and Woock, the authors of Confronting School and Work, set themselves a very challenging task. According to the authors, their book

> ... concentrates specifically on the effects of social forces and economic policy on the present generation of young adults ..., in terms of their schooling, their work prospects, and their own responses to the changes in both that have occurred in the last ten years (1984: 1).

Dwyer *et al.* see the need to relate macro factors ('Australian society, its relationship to the western economy as a whole, the economic and social changes at present affecting it ...') to '... the likely responses of contemporary youth to the world which now confronts them' (1984: 2). They note that

> Many studies of Australian schooling and of Australian youth do not connect these two levels of analysis. In our view, it is very important to grasp the intricate relationships between macro-economic and social forces and the realities of people's everyday lives (1984: 2).

While the authors may be applauded for the ambitious task they set themselves, the very extent of that task may have detracted from the book, perhaps making it less cogent than had a less ambitious task been undertaken.

The preface to Confronting School and Work indicates the commitment of the authors to a class analysis approach. They comment that '... in developing our analysis of Australian society, we have found the concept of class conflict to be of particular value' (1984: 4). They note appropriately that youth differ in their experiences depending on locality, sex and ethnicity and add that '... we certainly would not claim that such differences are insignificant when placed alongside the inequality and oppression common to them all in a class society' (1984: 5).

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However, they go on to state that:

> Nevertheless, we do think it is reasonable to insist that the influences of their own social class on their different experiences are worth examining as a major formative aspect of their lives ... (1984: 5).

The preceding statement is followed by a clarification by the authors of their position on social class:

> ... in using the term 'class' we are not interested in using it as a category to indicate people's class position within society, but rather as a term which flows from a basic and unresolved conflict that bedevils capitalist society as a result of the way its economy operates (1984: 5).

Dwyer *et al.* go on to note that

> ... even those workers whom most social scientists would assign to 'the working class' are not necessarily a homogeneous or even unified group with the same attitudes, aspirations or patterns of behaviour (1984: 5).

However, they subsequently inform the reader that the perspectives of '... a primary reference group involved in our community-based project ... will be used as a guide when we talk of working class cultural perspectives' (1984: 5). More justification for the use of this group should perhaps have been given, especially in the light of the preceding comment on the non-homogeneity of the working class.

More supportive material might have been desirable in Chapter 4. In that chapter the claims that 'The shift towards the capital-intensive extractive industries makes the ready supply of a large number of qualified personnel unnecessary' (1984: 85) and that

> Computer-based decision-making, planning,data analysis and ordering implies that future productivity will be far less dependent on the development of highly qualified staff. Educational expansion is no longer an imperative of economic growth (1984: 86).

seem insufficiently supported.

In a rhetorical mood, Dwyer *et al.* note, towards the end of their preface, that

> Our experience has convinced us that despite the hardships that they [working class people] face as members of a society which discriminates against them, they have an independence of outlook and a continuing tradition of social relationships. These enable them to transcend the subordination that is forced on them and thus preserve distinctive perspectives on life that are in marked contrast to those which supposedly bring 'success' in society's terms (1984: 5-6).

The above quote is one instance of the authors' seeming accentuation of the positive aspects of working class life. Elsewhere they write that

> ... the capacity of working class people to maintain their dignity, resourcefulness and distinctive human values in the face of exploitative material conditions is vitally important. It has been frequently asserted, that violence, sexism and a particular thread of anti-intellectualism are endemic to working class life. Our view is that these factors are not surprising in a class society (1984: 67).

Dwyer *et al.* do not refute that working class life involves the negative aspects just mentioned. Yet when they come to discuss working class schooling, they apparently do not see any problems inherent in basing such schooling on a culture laced with violence, sexism and anti-intellectualism. They write that

> Schooling should not be used to impose aspects of a different culture onto a captive audience, but as an arena in which the knowledge, the cultural traditions and values of the students are the foundation of the curriculum (1984: 142-43).

They add that

> In our experience, it is also crucial that the learning process should be grounded in the experiences and perspectives of the students, in order to ensure that the activities are meaningful, that they engage directly the concerns of the students, and draw on their creative energies (1984: 143).

This reviewer preferred the approach taken by Connell *et al.* in Making the Difference. In exploring how to improve working class schooling, Connell *et al.* acknowledge that

> ... the school ... must have a critical relationship with its clientele and their experience, and be free to oppose those aspects of working-class life which are in themselves oppressive ... we can recognise the fact that living in an exploitative society, and being exploited and pushed around, does some pretty nasty things to people.
>
> We see this, in our study, in the ugly sexism of some of the boys and their fathers; in the aimless hitting-out of some of our school resisters, ... in the cultural desert that many of the parents inhabit and the kids are being locked into ... The school ... must be prepared to struggle constantly against sexism and patriarchy, however deeply embedded they are in the school's clientele ... (1982: 200).

Many readers of the Youth Studies Bulletin may, however, find Confronting School and Work of interest and use. Chapters 1 ('Youth Unemployment and Schooling'), 4 ('Education and Economic Policy'), 6 ('The School-Work Transition') and 7 ('Teachers and the Working Class') may especially be of interest to persons concerned with school-to-work transition.

Chapter 1 starts with some student views on 'life after school', then contrasts the school leaving process for students from three different schools ('North Shore Grammar', 'Suburban Secondary' and 'Country High'). It then presents some statistics on school retention and on youth unemployment (by age, occupational group, geographical location and age/sex), before discussing reactions to the youth unemployment problem.

Chapter 1 closes with a discussion of 'Schooling: a contested terrain', in which the conflicting notions of schooling as vocationally oriented and schooling as providing general education are noted. The authors see the responses of the Federal Liberal Government to youth unemployment as being '... focused on training schemes aimed at maintaining young people's orientation towards employment, and at improving juvenile productivity' (1984: 26). It is perhaps curious that the authors devote only about half a page in Chapter 1 to evidence concerning the 'standards debate'. Some readers, of course, may feel that such an allocation is ample.

Chapter 4 traces links between the economy and education policy from post-World War II to the early 1980s under such headings as 'The Years of Growth', 'The Problem of Inequality', 'The Dilemmas of the 1970s' and 'The Reversal of Educational Policy'. Chapter 6 starts with a section headed 'Labour Market Trends for Youth'. Curiously though, the discussion of the youth labour market in that section is fairly general, more detailed discussion being presented later in the chapter under the heading 'The Hidden Agenda of Transition'. Under the heading 'The Government Policy', Chapter 6 offers a discussion of CYSS and EPUY which notes criticisms of those schemes. It then discusses State-level transition education, outlines three transition programs and discusses assumptions underlying transition programs. Chapter 7 offers some insights into teaching working class students, using as a source the previously mentioned community-based project. It discusses 'Aims in Working Class Schools', 'Strategies' and 'Outcomes'.

The book presents some useful statistics and offers insights into youth programs and into student and teacher outlooks. While considerable attention is given in the book to social class, attention is also given to gender, especially gender in the working class context. The discussion of gender should especially interest readers concerned with the plight of young females in the current socio-economic circumstances. Changes in 'scapegoats' and policy in the school-to-work transition area are also discussed, and this discussion may be of special interest to Youth Studies Bulletin readers. While the book does give some insights into '... the intricate relationships between macro-economic and social forces and the realities of people's everday lives' (1984: 2), some aspects of the book may have most appeal to readers who are already disciples of the class analysis approach.

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LOOKING AT OTHER COUNTRIES. No. 6: INDONESIA

A TRACER STUDY OF SCHOOL LEAVERS IN INDONESIA

*by Ruth Daroesman**

That the education system must assist in preparing young people for employment has been accepted in Indonesia since before Independence. The colonial government set up schools beyond the village 3 year school principally to train the necessary numbers of government clerks; and in the early 1950s policy statements mentioned the needs for technical, commercial, agricultural, industrial, shipping and fishing schools. Today there remains a wide variety of schools dedicated to production of fairly specialised occupational groups, many of which began as training schools for staff of government departments, but now include enrolments from the general public.

Governmental and parental concern over the high rates of unemployment among recent school leavers, and over the 'relevance' of the school system to the national development program, led the Department of Education to conduct a Tracer Study - a three-year longitudinal study of the employment experience of some 10,000 students completing the final year of primary and secondary school cycles between 1976 and 1978 in eight widely differing regions of Indonesia. The study set itself to investigate whether the vocational schools were indeed acting as terminal schools; whether they were justified in terms of the kinds of employment found by their graduates; how this compared to employment obtained by students from the general academic schools, and what role, if any, the schools played in assisting their graduates to find employment. The second main area of investigation was the process by which new entrants made their way into the labour force, what kinds of efforts they made and, for those who obtained jobs, how occupation and remuneration related to the level, type and quality of the school attended.

This paper outlines some of the results of this study.

Entry into the Labour Force and Duration of Unemployment

The point at which a young person ceases to be economically inactive and becomes 'unemployed' is vague and ill-defined. Because existing Census and Labour Force data on duration of unemployment for first-time job seekers were so unreliable, the Tracer Study attempted to learn something about this process. Does a first-timer become unemployed when he first feels or decides that he would like a job, or when he first makes an effort to find one? Is a single effort over a period of a year sufficient to make him 'unemployed', particularly if at the same time he still harbours hopes of continued study? These questions were not adequately answered by the Tracer Study but some data were collected which throw a little light on this grey area.

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Among those who were employed a year after leaving school, two-thirds to three-quarters had found work within three months of beginning the job search, and only about 10 per cent had taken more than eight months to find work. In contrast, two-thirds of those who had not found work a year after leaving school had been looking for longer than eight months.

The Study also found that only a very few of those still looking for work at the end of one year after leaving school had begun their search immediately after leaving school; almost all had had a 'resting' period, ranging from a few weeks to several months, before they reported themselves as actively seeking work. For most school leavers there is clearly an elastic but fairly lengthy period when the hope of continuing to the next level of education takes precedence over the less attractive and certainly less familiar alternative of employment. It was found, furthermore, that this queueing for return to school was worthwhile in that about one-third did manage to re-enter after a year's wait, though often not in the school of their first choice. While there are, undoubtedly, many discouraged job seekers among Indonesia's unemployed, the Tracer Study indicates that many of the young inactive are not so much 'discouraged' workers as that they are 'hopeful' candidates for re-entry to the educational system, particularly in urban areas.

Opportunities to continue education are dependent in a large degree on school type: students from technical schools may go on to engineering faculties, those from arts stream in the general academic schools may continue with humanities or arts at university level, etc. In theory, opportunities for further study are wider for those with general academic than for those with vocational training, but in fact this is true only for transfer from upper secondary to higher education. The Study noted that entry to specialised schools at the lower secondary level was rarely made on the basis of the opportunities such schools were designed to give for employment; rather, it reflected the demand for schooling per se. In the first year of the Study, conducted just before the students left school, it was found that at the lower secondary level, only 3 per cent of those in the sample had chosen a vocational school because they felt it would offer them a better chance of finding a job; students and their parents wanted a foot on the educational ladder and if this was not available in the general schools, then any school was better than none. At the upper secondary level, however, 40 per cent had originally chosen their school for employment reasons. In the general secondary schools only 2 per cent of the school leavers responded that they were definitely going to look for work when they completed their current cycle of education.

The Job Search

Blaug speaks of the 'almost unimaginable degree' to which young school leavers in developing countries rely on family and friends for assistance in finding work. Students in the Tracer Study felt that the main factor in finding a job was having good 'connections', and the principal (and for many the only) means of search was informing one's friends and family that one was in the market for a job. Of those who were still unemployed a year after leaving school, 15 per cent had done nothing specific to look for work, half had made one or two efforts, usually verbal, and only 35 per cent had made more than three efforts to find work. This low level of activity seems to be related to a common and pervasive feeling among young first-timers, more exaggerated among those from general than among those from vocational schools, that they had little or nothing in the way of skills to offer employers.

One important obstacle in job search was the school leaver's identification of the kind of job or jobs for which he might be qualified. Overwhelmingly, as in most other developing countries, the civil service was seen as the most suitable occupation. While job security is undoubtedly an important factor in this choice, it is also probably true that many secondary school leavers have so little experience of the 'world of work' that the civil service is the only occupation they can identify, apart from the professions or manual work. Both the employed and the unemployed school leaver felt narrowly bound to the specialisation of the school attended; as we just noted, this specialisation was not necessarily one chosen for its own sake. Since these attitudes of limitation on the kind of work the student could hope for were already evident before the student left school, they were clearly not the result of his own experience, but must have arisen from lack of information about the range of jobs within the economy, or from attitudes inculcated by parents or school, or both. The extent to which this variety of specialised schools limits the confidence of their graduates needs to be more seriously considered.

Another obstacle in job search was the cost of applying for jobs. Almost half those who had obtained jobs reported that they had spent the equivalent of (US)$15 in the search: travel, photocopies, letters of recommendation, etc. This amount is quite sufficient to limit the efforts of the less well-to-do to no more than a few applications.

With the exception of teacher training schools (which in the years this Study was carried out were experiencing very high rates of recruitment for the expansion of the primary school system), schools played virtually no role in informing their students of job possibilities, or advising them how to apply or even to write letters of application for jobs. There were a few notable exceptions to this rule: some private schools operated workshops and had close connections with former students in industry or commerce through whom they carried on an active program of job-search for their graduates. Only two such schools were found in the sample of nearly 200.

Reliance on casual information for job search is understandable, given the nature of newspaper advertisement or the role of employment agencies. In a small study of the role of newspapers in employment recruitment, it was found that less than 3 per cent of all jobs advertised were for posts for which inexperienced school leavers or graduates would be considered.[1] Vacancies registered with the employment agencies operated by the Department of Manpower were also overwhelmingly for experienced workers, while private employment agencies dealt only with top management and the highly skilled. Recruitment through newspaper advertisements is moreover limited to the largest of the national dailies and little use is made of this channel in any but the capital city and half a dozen of the largest cities. Many students in the Tracer Study were quite unaware that the Department of Manpower maintained employment registries.

Those who were looking for jobs were somewhat more mobile than those who had already found them and unemployment rates were much higher among those who had never moved than among those who did move. One-fifth of the active males moved residence in the year after leaving school; of these, nearly two-thirds were unemployed. About half the movers went to the five large cities of Java, two-thirds of them to Jakarta and the remaining one-third to the other four major cities. The rate of mobility for boys was

twice that for girls. It was not possible, however, to say whether the movement was entirely for work purposes, as many may have been returning home after studying in another city.

Clark analysed movement into and out of jobs among the school leavers.[2] Many first-time jobs are temporary and the proportion of school leavers who have worked at least once since leaving school is somewhat higher than the proportion at work two years after leaving school. It was not uncommon to have two or three such short term jobs before moving into relatively permanent employment, but it appears that this kind of experience is not a stepping stone to more satisfactory employment. Those who waited did, in general, get better jobs than those who entered the labour force immediately after leaving school. Girls tended to find work more quickly than boys, but at lower rates of pay.

Aspirations

One of the more interesting points which arose out of the Tracer Study was the attempt to identify and measure attitudes toward work. A list of 36 occupations was given to both the employed and the unemployed school leaver during an interview conducted one year after they had left school. These occupations represented jobs actually held by those of their peers who had already found employment, and were graded very roughly according to the educational level of those holding the jobs. Thus primary school leavers were asked their attitudes towards 15 occupations only, the lower secondary 23 occupations, and the upper secondary 36 occupations. They were asked first whether they felt physically and educationally competent to do the jobs. For every student who felt competent to do any job, there were four who felt incapable. The only exception to this was the civil service, where ten said they would be competent to one who would not.

Students were also asked whether they would prefer work in offices or in factories; the preferences were overwhelmingly in favour of offices, even when factory work paid better; the graduates of technical schools were more willing to work in factories than those from general academic schools who almost totally rejected factory work.

The unemployed were asked what they thought a prospective employer required from them. Their expectations were first, a skill then, in order, honesty, ability to learn quickly, obedience and hard work. For themselves, the things they look for in a job were first of all security - a pensionable post took precedence over every other consideration - followed by interesting work, and only thirdly good pay.

The Tracer Study also conducted a small 'jury sample' of teachers, headmasters, and educational administrators, using the same ranked list of 36 occupations. On the whole, the 'jury' assessment of posts was higher than that of students: teachers and headmasters had more ambitious (as well as more limited) ideas of the types of jobs their graduates could do than did the graduates themselves, while educational administrators (mainly ministry officials) held that graduates should be able to do a much wider range of jobs. Only in the case of the teacher training school did administrators, headmasters, teachers and students agree on the kind of job - primary school teaching - their graduates could do.

The first response interviewers got to the query 'what kind of job are you looking for?' was, with very few exceptions, 'something suitable to my education'. Few students were able to go beyond this; if pressed,

most nominated the civil service. Even graduates from the technical schools felt limited to the actual machines they had worked with. A typical case concerned graduates from a school which had obtained old sugar machines from a nearby sugar mill for practical work. These students felt that their employment possibilities were limited to working with the (now obsolete) sugar mill machinery and of those still unemployed a year later none had searched beyond the local sugar mill for employment.

Using the same list of graded occupations, interviewers asked school leavers whether they would take each job if it were offered, at rates of pay about 20 per cent lower than that being received by their peers already in employment. Only about 20 per cent of the unemployed reported that they would. All were then asked the same questions again, but at rates of pay actually being received in these occupations by their peers. At these rates, only 40 per cent of the unemployed would have accepted work if offered.

Thus, of those still unemployed a year after leaving school, only about 20 per cent said they would be willing to accept work at any rate of pay, another 40 per cent would take current wages, and a final 40 per cent were holding out for rates above those being currently paid. Again, civil service was an exception: more than 40 per cent would accept government employment at any rate of pay, and only 20 per cent would reject it at current rates.

Rejections

Distinct from questions of aspiration, the unemployed school leavers were also asked whether they had ever rejected any job offer and why. Fifteen per cent of those who were still unemployed a year after leaving school had rejected offers of work; the rate for girls was twice as high as for boys, but reasons for rejection were due to location or type of work - far from home, night shift, heavy or dirty work - while boys rejected jobs because of low wages. Girls rejected jobs at about equal rates from lower and upper secondary levels, but boys only at upper secondary. No primary school leaver had ever rejected a job.

The Schools and Unemployment

Unemployment rates for state school leavers were somewhat higher than for private schools. This may reflect the dual nature of private schools: the high quality schools have greater freedom in establishing community relationships than do state schools so that their graduates more readily find jobs; the poorer quality private schools cater for lower income households and their graduates may not have that advantage.

While results are far from conclusive because of the small sample, it would also appear that the 'employment success' rate of a school (the number of its graduates economically active who had obtained jobs by the end of one year) varies inversely with supply, that is, the scarcer a graduate of a certain type of school is in the region, the more likely he is to find a job. But there are still many difficulties in interpreting these results, not the least of which is mobility.

Movement into Employment

If one thinks of the transfer from school to employment as a movement along a continuum, three rough stages can be identified. First are those who move straight into the labour force on leaving school and rather

quickly into employment. We saw above that two-thirds of those who were employed within a year of leaving school had found jobs within three months of beginning their search. This is a not unimpressive performance, and the concern over unemployment should not obscure the fact that large numbers of young school leavers do find jobs without much difficulty. The second group are those who enter the labour force soon after leaving school but move into employment only through a slowly moving queue. Clark's analysis of the Tracer Study data showed that only about 5 per cent of those looking for work in any one month would have found work by the following month.[3] At the far end of the continuum are the third group, who do not (or do not yet) consider themselves unemployed, but are waiting in the hope of returning to school or university. One-third of these will succeed, and many others will go on to courses of one kind or another, postponing entry into the labour force. The remainder will at some point almost surely join the queue, but at what point remains a subject for further study. It is probable that, in retrospect, such young people may think of their entire period since leaving school as a period of 'unemployment' when interviewed in Census and Labour Force Studies, even though for some part of that period they neither looked for work nor were they prepared to take jobs.

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3. Ibid.

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TABLE 1

Length of Time Unemployed for Employed and Unemployed
(percentages)

School Level	Less than 3 months	4-7 months	8 months or more	Total
Employed				
Primary/lower secondary				
Males	74	14	12	100
Females	81	5	14	100
Average	76	12	13	100
Upper Secondary				
Males	57	22	12	100
Females	67	22	5	100
Average	65	23	10	100
Unemployed				
Primary	9	2	88	100 (44)
Lower secondary	15	15	70	100 (127)
Upper secondary	18	20	63	100 (757)
Average	16	18	66	100 (928)

Source: C.M. Widodo and Konta Damanik, The Employment Experience of School Leavers (Jakarta, Indonesia Department of Education and Culture, Office of Educational and Cultural Research and Development), 1979, p.69 (mimeo).

TABLE 2

Employment, Unemployment and Schooling Rates, One and Two Years after Upper Secondary School

	One Year			Two Years		
	M	F	T	M	F	T
Working	22.8	30.4	26.0	32.8	42.6	36.9
Wanting work	33.7	31.2	32.6	20.1	14.0	17.5
Schooling	38.6	35.7	37.4	44.8	38.5	42.1
Inactive	4.9	2.7	3.9	2.4	4.9	3.5
	100	100	100	100	100	100
Wanting work as percentage of economically active	59.7	52.2	55.7	37.9	24.7	32.1

	General Academic	Vocational		Domestic Science	Teacher Training
		Commercial	Technical		
Working	17	34	42	15	84
Wanting work	14	28	27	21	2
Schooling	65	33	28	57	13
Inactive	4	5	3	7	1
	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Tracer Study.

TEENAGE UNEMPLOYMENT IN NEW ZEALAND

*by Barrie G. Stacey**

The Background

After the post-1945 period of full employment, obtaining paid employment became increasingly difficult for people in New Zealand from 1976 onwards. This applies particularly to teenagers, and especially to female and non-white teenagers. As the general unemployment rate has risen, the employment prospects of teenagers have deteriorated. By 1980 the youth unemployment problem had reached major proportions and given rise to considerable social concern.

The rapid rise in unemployment took place during the period of three successive Muldoon-dominated, National Party governments. The major features of this economic era were near-zero economic growth; inflation reaching record heights; unemployment reaching its highest ever level in 1983-84; massive increases in government income tax revenues; government borrowing at home and abroad on a colossal scale; heavy government investment in controversial, capital-intensive, 'think big' projects which yield few jobs; a very long wage and salary freeze accompanied by a limited price freeze; a record net migration outflow between 1977 and 1981; and a 1981 general election promise by the National Party of 410,000 new jobs in the 1980s (e.g. Treasury, 1984). During this period the value of the $NZ fell about 50 per cent against the $US and 40 per cent against the $AUS.

These governments composed very largely of middle-aged and elderly male farmers, accountants, lawyers and businessmen displayed little concern for teenagers and their problems. They attempted to reduce youth wages and increased enormously the income tax levied on low incomes, primarily those of teenagers, married women, solo mothers, the disabled and racial minorities. Such policies were (and still are) disadvantageous to teenagers who are in the educational system and who have to supplement the family income by temporary or part-time paid employment. The period 1976-1984 saw a stagflation economy in which teenagers increasingly had difficulty in getting a job and in holding on to any job obtained; when actually employed their average wage was low combined with punishing rates of income tax. In mid-1984 the Secretary of Labour stated that unemployment is a long-term structural problem and there is no hope for any improvement in the situation in the medium term, with the best prospect being a jump in migration out of New Zealand (Jackson, 1984).

Among the reasons suggested for teenage unemployment by many government politicians and indeed many of the general public, the following seem to have been relatively popular:

- There are more (or too many) young people about, particularly those with characteristics associated with non-white youth
- Teenagers are too highly paid
- They need decent hairstyles, conventional clothes, improved deportment and better manners

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- Many young people are idle or work-shy and prefer bludging off the welfare system to a job
- Married women in paid employment are robbing the young of jobs
- Solo mothers in paid employment are robbing the young of jobs. (When they stay at home they are accused of being dole-bludgers)
- Schools are not preparing the young for jobs.

Throughout the Muldoon era there has been a marked tendency for many government politicians and their followers to hold the young themselves and the schools they attend largely, and latterly partly, responsible for teenage unemployment. Following from this, they claim that solutions to teenage unemployment lie substantially in changing the characteristics of teenagers and the education they receive. Muldoon himself, in the mass media, has put considerable stress upon married women and solo mothers leaving the labour force; that is, upon decreasing the number of females seeking jobs.

The Extent of Unemployment

The unemployed are usually defined as those persons who are not employed and are actively seeking employment. The official way of estimating unemployment in New Zealand is to add the number of persons registered as unemployed at the Department of Labour to the number employed on government-subsidised schemes. Table 1 shows official unemployment during the recent past when the total labour force fluctuated in size around 1.25 millions. The highest rates of unemployment have been among the young, particularly females in the 15-19 age group. At any one time between one-third and one-half of the officially designated unemployed are teenagers, with the non-white teenagers being more at risk than the white ones and non-white females being the most at risk.

TABLE 1

Registered Unemployed and Unemployed on Government Schemes January 1976 - January 1984

January	Registered	Schemes	Total
1976	6,416	4,209	10,625
1977	5,275	6,001	11,276
1978	18,818	13,450	32,268
1979	24,904	31,358	56,262
1980	28,170	27,631	55,801
1981	47,846	24,474	72,320
1982	50,773	25,830	76,603
1983	74,053	33,756	107,809
1984	83,597	48,126	131,723

SOURCE: Labour and Employment Gazette, 34, March, 1984, p.1. and personal communication from Department of Labour

This official approach to unemployment measurement seriously underestimates the number of unemployed. It discounts the unemployed who have not registered because they are not eligible for financial benefits (owing to having an employed spouse) or will not accept 'charity' or feel that registration is humiliating. It appears that a majority of unemployed women and a large minority of unemployed teenagers do not register. There is the further issue of the 'discouraged unemployed' who have given up looking for a job in difficult circumstances. Among these are the 'disguised unemployed', including teenagers who are in educational institutions solely because they cannot obtain a job. It has been suggested that the official total of unemployed should be increased by a multiplier to obtain a more accurate measure, with the suggested size of the multiplier ranging from around 1.3 to over 2.0 (e.g. Chapple, 1978). It seems reasonable to assume that in January 1984, given an official unemployment rate among teenagers of 40,480, at least 60,000 were unemployed, and possibly more than 80,000. Though the number of unemployed teenagers declined in the following months, the short and medium-term employment outlook for teenagers is bleak, especially for the non-whites who are predominantly Maoris and Pacific Islanders.

The Causes of Unemployment

There has been a good deal of controversy about the causes of unemployment, but little research based on New Zealand conditions. The following inter-related factors are widely accepted by social scientists as significant causes of unemployment:

- The failure of the economy since 1976 to grow at a sufficient rate, and in the right way, to accommodate those seeking employment
- A growing labour force, with teenagers and married women contributing significantly to the growth
- Deteriorating economic conditions which have resulted in a loss of some jobs because of contractions, restructuring and business failure
- Technological changes reducing the need for labour, including new young recruits
- The low priority given by government to unemployment and job creation (in a situation where many policymakers are not concerned to maintain high employment levels), and the attempted trading-off of unemployment against inflation
- Migration outflow of certain kinds of valuable skills
- Government and producers substituting imports for domestic labour (thereby putting pressure upon foreign exchange to pay for imports)
- Foreign borrowing on a colossal scale requiring New Zealand to sell an ever-increasing proportion of its output to service the rising interest on the debt. This growing overseas drain on resources has tended to increase unemployment
- Low expectations on the part of employers leading to a reduction in employment of new apprentices and young trainees.

With rising unemployment, employers have a wider choice of potential recruits for many of the jobs which are available. Thus the competition faced by teenagers in the labour market intensifies. In addition, they tend to be disadvantaged by lack of work experience and 'maturity'. When teenagers become unemployed for a lengthy period of time, this may also count against them because it may be interpreted as indicating low motivation and poor value as employees.

Some economists, politicians and businessmen have stressed the 'excessive' cost of labour as a cause of unemployment, without providing any convincing supporting evidence (Endres, 1984; Social Sciences Research Fund Committee, 1984). In fact, the New Zealand economy features relatively high income taxes together with relatively low incomes, exerting enormous pressure on married women to earn money in order to avoid family poverty. Yet other analysts argue that there is a fundamental imbalance between the internal and external sectors of the economy, which necessitates substantial unemployment to conserve foreign exchange. Further, some monetarists argue that unemployment comes primarily from people voluntarily deciding to spend their time searching for a desirable job rather than in employment. They assert that unemployment suits the unemployed in an economy where jobs are available for those who really want paid work. It has been suggested that the rehabilitation of unemployed by certain economists has contributed to the falling concern with anti-unemployment policies among politicians and public servants.

Schools have been held responsible for much teenage unemployment by some sections of society. However, schools cannot create jobs for teenagers (Nash, 1981). Their staff may attempt to improve educational standards, careers guidance, employment-oriented activities, job search skills, to ease the transition from school into the labour market, and to provide models of alternative employment structures (Shuker, 1983). But solutions to teenage unemployment do not lie in changes in schools (Freeman-Moir, 1981; Nash, 1984; Shuker, 1983). Teachers are all too aware that unemployment bears very unevenly on the population and that teenagers are a highly vulnerable group (PPTA Journal, 1981). Increasing the average level of educational qualifications and generally improving job search skills simply raises the terms of competition; it does not create jobs for the young.

The Effects of Unemployment

In a nation which places enormous importance on paid work, unemployment is widely regarded as bad and undesirable. It is bad for the unemployed and their relatives and it is bad for society because of the personal, family, economic, social and political consequences that tend to flow from it. Unemployment is widely seen as wasteful of human resources; costly to the revenue system; likely to increase poverty, ill health, social unrest, delinquency and crime; socially divisive; and, on a large scale, a threat to national stability (see, for example, Abbott, 1982; Easton, 1982; NZ Financial Review, 1982; Jackson, 1984; Macky and Haines, 1981; PPTA, 1981).

Empirical studies indicate that unemployment adds to the difficulties in the transition from school to the labour market and that it is harmful to many teenagers who experience it (Abbott, 1981; Hesketh and Shouksmith, 1982; Korndorffer, 1985; Macky, 1984; Waldegrave and Coventry, 1982). For the young, unemployment often means a life of frustration, boredom and unhappiness, and it tends to be detrimental to their health and psychological well-being.

The existence of much teenage unemployment, and the publicity it receives, are believed by some analysts to influence the motivation, attitudes and conduct of teenagers in school and, probably, to be somewhat subversive of performance and meritocratic values (PPTA, 1981; Shuker, 1983). This applies particularly to non-white teenagers and lower class

youth in general. In addition, such unemployment may well influence the outlook and behaviour of many teenagers in employment. Undoubtedly concern exists in many quarters that a sizeable section of youth may become disenchanted with school education because it cannot deliver desired employment benefits and disillusioned with an adult society which has created such an undesirable situation for them. There is also dissatisfaction over unemployed teenagers being pressured into a return to school.

Easton (1982) points out that rising unemployment increases the demand for government services, not only for direct expenditure on unemployment benefits but also for additional expenditure on education, health, social welfare and other services. This is at a time when the government's tax base, which depends primarily on income tax revenue, is constrained by deteriorating economic conditions.

What Has Been Done?

During the Muldoon era the government reacted to rising unemployment by restricting employment in the public sector and by developing more than twenty 'job creation' programs over a period of time (Labour and Employment Gazette, 1980; 1981; 1984). Currently they cost around NZ$300 million annually. About half of the programs are directed at teenagers.

Though these policy developments were designated 'job creation' programs, it does not follow that they have actually created more permanent jobs. They are meant to: a) promote further vocationally oriented education and training; b) provide generous subsidies to delineated employers who recruit unemployed people, including teenagers; c) aid community development schemes; and d) create short-term non-essential jobs (because of high levels of unemployment), some of which are for teenagers and students. In practice, leaving aside vacation jobs for students, the various programs function as holding pens for the unemployed.

It seems likely that the policy of restricting government employment has increased unemployment. Notwithstanding their cost, empirical evaluation of so-called job creation programs is lacking. Social scientists, including economists, have been critical of these programs as ways of promoting employment by creating more jobs. We have no grounds for accepting that the net effect of the government's employment strategy has been to create additional jobs, and it may well have created some additional unemployment. There are a number of reasons for this. The taxation required to fund the programs results in fewer jobs because taxpayers have less money to spend. Employers who receive subsidies are favoured over those who do not; to the competitive disadvantage of the latter who may reduce labour. Further, some employers take advantage of the subsidy schemes by misrepresenting their recruitment of staff. Putting taxation revenue into subsidy schemes distorts allocation decisions and inhibits structural adjustments to changing circumstances which would benefit the economy. Finally, government claims about the potential economic and employment returns from 'think big' projects have been rejected by many specialists (National Business Review, 1984).

National Party governments regarded outward migration as an unemployment buffer. It was seen as exporting problems, most frequently to Australia. However, unemployed people often lack the resources and the inclination to migrate. Migrants include a disproportionate share of highly educated and skilled people, though they may be reacting to the

depressed economic conditions that generate the large-scale unemployment. The loss of such educated and skilled people through migration may actually increase unemployment by a) reducing internal economic activity; b) draining away human and financial resources; and c) making it more difficult for the economy to respond quickly to any particular economic upturns (McDermott, 1979). A much more flexible approach to early retirement could provide an employment buffer at modest cost to the government, but it has not been viewed favourably as a policy option and has met both employer and trade union resistance. Another possible buffer would be to allow, every year, a number of people to choose to be non-employed, vacating their jobs for a limited period to the unemployed. The non-employed could receive bursaries of the same value as unemployment benefits to obtain further education, training or to pursue any other project.

Final Note

In July 1984 the government of New Zealand changed, Labour taking power with a substantial majority in Parliament during a currency crisis which was made public the day after the election. In the election campaign, among its policy objectives Labour gave a high priority to reducing unemployment. Soon after taking office, the new government caucus in Parliament formed an action group to make recommendations to deal with unemployment among young people. It also created a new Ministry of Women's Affairs which will be concerned, among other things, with women's employment and unemployment. However, given the massive economic problems the government faces, an inevitably rising public debt and depressed state of the economy, it is in an extremely difficult situation. In 1984, the weight of specialist opinion clearly regards unemployment as remaining a real problem at least for the rest of this decade, and the teenage section of the population as remaining especially vulnerable to its adverse consequences (e.g. Macky, 1984; Nash, 1984; Social Science Research Fund Committee, 1984).

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YOUTH STUDIES: THE RESEARCH

LABOUR MARKETS AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Part 5

Preface

. THE YOUTH LABOUR MARKET: THE EFFECTS OF UNEMPLOYMENT

A summary of the Research

by C. Blakers

. THE COMMUNITY EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM: JOB CREATION OR WORK EXPERIENCE?

by Moira Rowland

. THE COMMUNITY EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM: VALUABLE EXPERIENCE FOR FUTURE PLANNING

by Annie Kavanagh

November 1984

PREFACE

This, the fifth and last of the summaries of research on the Youth Labour Market, discusses what is known about the effects of unemployment on individuals generally and on young people in particular. The discussion covers the role of work in the life of the individual, and the material, psychological and other effects which deprivation of work can bring with it.

Moira Rowland and Annie Kavanagh present two different perspectives on the Community Employment Program (CEP). Moira Rowland traces and meticulously documents the changes which have taken place in the concept and aims of the CEP, analysing the implications. The table she has compiled will be of particular interest, indicating as it does numbers and percentages of persons in various groups registered with the CES as unemployed who have been placed under the Wage Pause Program and the CEP in 1983 and 1984.

The second paper, by Annie Kavanagh, gives the perspective of a person who has an intimate knowledge of the workings of both the Wage Pause Program and the CEP. Her constructive criticism of the CEP draws on her considerable experience.

My prime of youth is but a frost of cares.

THE EFFECTS OF UNEMPLOYMENT: A SUMMARY OF THE RESEARCH

Work and the Work Ethic

Unemployment is the lack of work, as work is conceived of in our society. The effects of unemployment on the individual are those which follow deprivation of the benefits which work brings with it. These benefits in turn are a product of prevailing concepts of work and of the place it fills in the life of the individual and the wellbeing of the society. The effects of unemployment thus depend on what 'work' means to the individual and the society and how important is the role it fills.

There would appear to be four essential elements in any concept of work as we know it. First, it is an activity or a series of activities of sustained duration, taking up a significant portion of the individual's time and energy.

Second, it is, for the individual, an obligation. The basic obligation is the need to subsist, and this is an obligation imposed both from without by the conditions required to sustain life, and from within the individual by his/her impulse to live. Beyond this, other sources of obligation may apply, both external and arising from the individual's own nature and desires. Among the external obligations can be included force or the threat of force, and the pressures of public opinion and social attitudes. Obligations arising from within the individual may be the desire to achieve greater comfort of living, affluence or security for self, family or other group; the drive for power; allegiance to country, State or ideology; the desire to be of service to others; the desire to be accepted by others, or to win acclaim, reputation, status; the desire to prove oneself to oneself or to others; the desire to express oneself or to convey a message. Once the need to work in order to live has been met, the obligation to work is generally a composite of a number of urges appropriate to the individual and the society, and expressed in terms of 'duty', 'right', 'moral obligation' or 'ethic'.

There is, thirdly, an identification of the individual with the work activity, both in the person's own view and as he or she is seen by others. The individual thinks of him/herself and is described by others as a plumber, mathematician, doctor, public servant, teacher, hairdresser. The work forms a central part of the person's concept of him/herself and of his/her identity, and often, over a period, begins to exert an influence on his/her personality and behaviour.

Fourthly, there is recognition of the work by others. The recognition may be by a group or groups within the society or by the society as a whole; it may be in the form of financial or other tangible rewards or by status and approval or by all in combination.

While the elements in the concept of work remain the same - activity, obligation, identification and recognition - the nature and form of each may change from one society to another and from one period to another; they may differ also between groups or classes within one society. But overall, each society will have its own characteristic concept of the activities, obligations and rewards considered appropriate to the individuals in it.

The term 'work ethic' or 'Protestant work ethic' is used currently to sum up Western concepts of work which have developed over the centuries in association with the growth of trade, technology and industrialisation and with the spread of Protestant belief in the virtue and morality of hard work leading to material advantage. So has developed a concept of work based essentially on material production rewarded by money and status. There follows a strong social consensus that each member of the community **ought** to work at an activity acceptable to the society in order to contribute to the needs of the society, to productivity, to progress and to his/her own moral wellbeing. Complementary with this is the individual's **right** to work, affirmed by United Nations Charter, but in most societies subject to political or economic expediency.

Following also from present concepts of the 'work ethic' is the tendency of the community to equate unemployment - whatever the social and economic circumstances - with 'laziness', 'bludging', 'carelessness' or 'negligence'; or, in the case of the handicapped, 'incapability'. There are other social effects of the 'work ethic' observable particularly in a period of social transition such as that from post-war full employment and sustained affluence through changing social, economic and industrial patterns to an uncertain future. One is the fear of changes in the industrial framework which make previously stable industries non-viable, and of automation which reduces the need for manpower. The fears have their justification in the threat of economic and social hardship, but at the root of them also is the individual's fear for his/her own identity, sense of worth and secure and recognised place in the society.

The significance that 'work' in the sense of 'paid employment' has for the individual is illustrated in the key role it has assumed in the changing position of women within the society. Traditionally, women's work has been unpaid employment in the home as housewives and mothers or paid employment derived from domestic roles and considered suitable for females (see, for example, Burke A50). Equality of opportunity for women has come to be strongly associated with the right of women to develop their potential and sense of personal identity in paid employment outside the home on conditions of opportunity, recognition and reward equal with those of male employees.

Thus, in our society, 'work' in the sense of paid employment which is materially productive or serving the materially productive has become central to the way of life - important to the society for its development and progress, and to the individual for his/her sense of self-respect and satisfaction. Because the individual is so closely identified with his/her work, his/her sense of his/her own worth and capability is also closely related to the ability to get and hold a job and to the kind of job held. Similarly, the person's style and standard of living are related to the rewards which the community accords to various occupations. And money being the main (though not the sole) measure of community esteem, it becomes a yardstick by which the individual and the job are in general judged by the community.

In the post-war decades, rising standards of affluence and of education had begun to affect attitudes to work. The expectation that work should bring satisfaction as well as financial reward was becoming more widespread; there was less uncritical acceptance that work - in the sense of what one has to do in order to eat or maintain one's comfort - is the prime object or necessity of living. Conversely, it was beginning to

be recognised that the maintenance of the way of life and of living standards no longer requires the continuous hard effort of the whole population as is necessary in a subsistence economy. Overall, out of the security and affluence of the post-war period came a greater emphasis on quality of living and of work together with more critical attitudes to work. These developments were symptomatic of a society which did not feel itself under economic threat; which was secure enough to question patterns of work and living and to concern itself with non-material concepts and issues.

As discussed in previous articles in this series, changes in the patterns of work have continued during the last decade and, in some cases like the incidence of part-time work, gained momentum. But these changes have come as enforced effects of the recession rather than from any widespread philosophic commitment to a more leisured society. For the individual, work has remained of central importance. Those in employment are concerned to keep their jobs and improve their positions; those without employment see the getting of a job an the necessary entry to a place in the community. In this, young people, despite what some individuals and groups in the community appear to believe, are no different from others in the society. All the available evidence points to a strong adherence to the work ethic among young people: a deep-rooted desire for a job and the benefits it brings (see, for example, Youth Studies Bulletin, Vol.3, No.1, February 1984, p.59).

Brewer, in a 1980 study, Out of Work, Out of Sight (B31), provides some insight into what a job can mean to an individual who has not had one:

> Among those who managed to find full-time work depression and tension dissipated and a renewed sense of social connectedness emerged. Confidence soared and life became more purposeful and satisfying. Just as they had earlier been stunned by their continuing unemployment the eventual offer of a job often met with bewilderment and incredulity:
>
> > When the lady at the office who interviewed me said that she would take me on I didn't believe it. I didn't want to get my hopes up; I've been disappointed that many times. When I rang up and they told me to start on Monday I just couldn't believe it. I just about cried. My parents were thrilled too. We all went out and celebrated.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> Those who gained work sometimes reflected their new status and pride in a markedly changed personal appearance. Several interviewers reported being struck by their fresh appearance and more mature demeanour. Whereas interviewees often stressed the financial rewards to be found in work, the relative emphasis after they had gained work was on the social aspects of work. A regular income above Poverty Line estimates did, however, free them to develop new friends and new social outlets:
>
> > The job has made me happier and given me more confidence. That's made it easier to make new friends. I've got a boy-friend now and I've got more money than before so I can buy new clothes and go out without asking my parents for money.

. . . . . .

respect awarded by the community. Both of these work benefits are reflected in the individual's sense of his/her own identity and worth. Behind these again is the assurance which comes from a sense of fulfilling through work a defined social and moral purpose; of having an accepted place in the society. Finally, work provides for the individual an incentive to and enforcement of activity, a means of ordering one's time and an opportunity for social contact and belonging.

Unemployment deprives the individual of these benefits. The unemployed person loses (or in the case of the school leaver) never gains an adequate assured income. The deprivation of the less tangible benefits of employment will affect different individuals in different ways depending on factors such as length of unemployment; individual attitudes, values and independence of mind; the financial and social support available. But among the consequences can be purposelessness, a sense of guilt, social isolation, inactivity and boredom. These in turn can result in deteriorating mental well-being showing itself in depression, resentment and frustration. These may in turn lead to deterioration in physical health.

Beyond the effects for individuals is the impact on the family group and more widely still on the society. In the family, anxiety and frustration can lead to tensions and quarrels. In the society, the consequences may be seen in increased rates of family disintegration, of health costs, of suicide and of crime.

All of these effects of large scale unemployment are recognised as possible. They are constantly referred to in comment and argument. But how much is actually known about the consequences of unemployment through investigation and research?

The Background to the Research

Between the Depression of the 1930s and the recession of the mid-1970s, Australia enjoyed a period of full employment. With an annual average unemployment rate of 1.9 per cent, concern with unemployment, its trends and effects, was not a major preoccupation of the society or of its researchers. Even when unemployment rates began to rise in the mid-1970s, the experience of the three post-war decades of expansion and prosperity induced in the community a strong sense of full employment as being the natural order of things - a belief that western society had learnt how to 'manage' the economy and that any period of unemployment could be no more than a passing phenomenon. This basic optimism was continually reinforced during the second half of the 1970s by the assurances of governments who perceived that their own interest lay in fostering the notion of unemployment as a cyclical and therefore temporary experience due mainly to overseas influences beyond immediate Australian control but certain to pass with an upturn in the U.S. economy and/or the impetus of an Australian resources boom.

At the same time, the concern beginning to be expressed about high and rising levels of youth unemployment was to a large extent diverted by government assurances that youth unemployment was mainly due to deficiencies in young people themselves or in their schooling. The 'dole bludger' myth had wide currency for some years in the second half of the 1970s, seeping from political and media assertions into the comments of

persons who might have been expected to be better informed. Even more intense and prolonged have been the criticisms of schooling which have been stimulated by the accusations that the schools have not prepared young people adequately for the world of work. Underlying all of this was, and to some extent still is, the assumption either that jobs are available for those who sincerely want them or that jobs will be available in the near future if young people are adequately trained and ready.

Against this background first of long years of prosperity and then of confusion and uncertainty, it is not surprising that a research interest in unemployment was slow in developing. The impetus, in fact, came during the second half of the 1970s from the high and growing levels of youth unemployment rather than from the increasing rates of general unemployment and it focused most strongly on trends, patterns and causes of youth unemployment rather than on effects. Now, a decade after the onset of post-war unemployment levels which have surpassed in numbers the unemployment of the 1930s, we are still a long way from knowing with any certainty what the effects of unemployment are on individuals. Even less do we know what its effects are or are likely to be on the society. An article by Martyn Harris in New Society (84/AB:162) reviewing, in the U.K. context, how unemployment affects people can be taken as an indication of Australian knowledge also:

> When there are three or four million people out of work and when, for the last four years, opinion polls have consistently placed unemployment at the top of the worry scale, it is an odd thing that we should know rather little about its effects. This brief review of research into unemployment, begun with a mild sense of panic at the imagined scale of the subject ended, frankly, in exasperation at the lack of knowledge available in many areas.
>
> What has been the effect of unemployment on family life, on divorce, on child abuse? No one seemed to know exactly. What was the effect of parental unemployment on children's work at school and on truancy? Has unemployment encouraged many people to move or emigrate? Where were the definitive figures on delinquency and crime, race and religion? An embarrassing silence. (p.88)

Stromback, in a recent review of the literature for a BLMR paper (84/AB:164) looks critically for unequivocal evidence of the effects claimed for unemployment and concludes that 'most of the research reviewed here is less than conclusive' (p.26).

Nevertheless, there has been in the last six or seven years an increasing attention given to the effects of unemployment on individuals. Like the research into many other aspects of employment and unemployment outlined in this series of papers, the studies which provide the information differ in size, sample, methodology and quality. They are on the whole not easily comparable or generalisable but taken together they contribute substantially to an understanding of the effects of unemployment on individuals, if not on the society as a whole.

The Research

The various studies on the effects of unemployment are differentiated by objectives and methodology. Among the objectives have been: to review the research literature in order to assess information and conclusions; to provide information generally on the effects of unemployment experienced by individuals in terms of income, activity, behaviour, mental and physical wellbeing; to provide this kind of information for selected groups such as young people, migrants, females; to focus on the mental and/or physical effects of unemployment on individuals or selected groups of individuals.

Reviews of research can be made as an end in themselves (for example, Stromback 84/AB:164; Harris 84/AB:162) or as background to a particular study (for example, Tiggemann 84/AB:173; Finlay-Jones and Eckhardt 84/AB: 27). For individual research projects, a number of different methods may be used to collect information. Tiggemann (84/AB: 173) mentions the kind of study which uses population aggregate economic and health indicators as a source of information and carries out complicated time series analyses on these (p.1). The best known example of this approach is the work of the American health statistician, Harvey Brenner. Using multiple regression analysis of economic data over many decades and comparing these with a number of different health indices, Brenner found a clear association between cycles of boom and slump and changes in the rate of general mortality, heart attacks, alcoholism, cirrhosis, suicide, murder and admission to mental hospitals (Harris 84/AB: 162, p.89). Brenner's methodology has been criticised. Tiggemann (84/AB: 173) points out some of the problems of time-series analyses as being:

- 'optimum lag' procedures increase the probability of statistical significance
- confounding with, for example, change in diet, medical care
- mis-specification of varisbles, based on available statistics
- 'ecological fallacy' i.e. the danger of equating correlation between two trends with cause and effect.

Stromback (84/AB: 164) details some of the criticisms, commenting that 'hardly any aspect of his model stands up to critical examination' (p.17). Harris, on the other hands, comments:

> Not surprisingly, Brenner's results have been savagely attacked. But they appear to be standing up fairly well, with many social scientists paying respectful attention to his findings, if only because they don't understand how he obtained them. (84/AB:162,p.89)

Most Australian studies (which have come to the Clearinghouse) focus on the experiences and reactions of individuals. Some use a case study approach: interviews of varying length and frequency, supplemented in some cases by questionnaires, to probe in depth the situation of selected individuals or groups of individuals so as to provide insights into the complex effects of unemployment. Examples of such studies are Turner's Stuck (84/AB:23); Brewer's Out of Work, Out of Sight (831) and Watson, Living on the Margin (84/AB:17). In other studies, the questionnaire, supplemented by interviews, provides the information (for example, Brewer 83/AB:17). Other studies rely entirely on a questionnaire to collect information on a fairly large scale (for example, Van Moorst 84/AB:165; BLMR Australian National Longitudinal Survey 84/AB:160). In another kind of study, statistical techniques are used to compare a selected group of unemployed with a matched control group of (usually though not always) employed people (for example, Feather 84/AB:174,175; Viney B122). These

and other studies such as that by Finlay-Jones and Eckhardt (84/AB:27) may use standardised techniques to measure psychological effects.

Taken together, these studies provide qualitative and quantitative information on the effects of unemployment, but they have, by their nature, considerable limitations. They deal with disparate groups in different places at different times. Some tend to treat 'the unemployed' as an homogeneous group, making no distinction for length of time unemployed or for other special factors. Most of the studies are snapshots, providing glimpses of particular groups at a particular time; they can provide no definitive information on the relationship of unemployment to characteristics or experiences of individuals which may cause or pre-dispose them to be unemployed. This kind of information can be provided only by longitudinal studies of appropriate deviation.

At present, there are three longitudinal studies which could provide information on the effects of unemployment. In the ongoing ACER study by Williams et al. (8102) begun in 1978, the focus is on destinations of the group being studied and information on effects, if gathered, is likely to be incidental to the main purposes. The second longitudinal study, that recently begun by the Bureau of Labour Market Research (84/AB:160) has, as one of its specific aims, the study of 'the changes observable in people as unemployment duration lengthens'[2] (p.7). It will be some time before this study can make a contribution to understanding of the effects of unemployment. The third study is the research in South Australia by Winefield, Tiggemann and Delin which focuses on the psychological effects of unemployment on young people. This was begun in August 1980 with questionnaires to a large group of students (3130) in Years 10, 11 and 12 at twelve randomly sampled high schools in the Adelaide metropolitan area. These young people were followed up with essentially the same questionnaire in August 1981, 1982, 1983 and 1984. Funding for this study has been a problem from year to year, but it is hoped that it will now continue. Its progress over the years has been reported in Clearinghouse Abstracts (see Annotated Bibliography 1980, D26; 828,44,96,121; 84/AB:172, 173).

Finally, mention must be made of the Report from the Select Committee of the House of Lords on Unemployment in the U.K. (83/AB:36). This Committee was appointed to consider and make recommendations on long-term remedies for unemployment in the U.K. The report is in three parts divided broadly between the nature of the problem, the options and the recommendations. Chapters 6 and 7 of this report examine in some detail and specificity the financial and social costs of unemployment. Australia, despite its evident disposition to set up Committees of Inquiry or Review on any occasion, has never focused on unemployment and there is no comparable authoritative overview in this country. Differing conditions and circumstances between the two countries preclude any unqualified application to Australia of the analysis and findings of the U.K. Report, but its general relevance cannot be ignored in any discussion of unemployment and its effects.

The Effects of Unemployment: Income Loss

Stromback (84/AB:164) notes that 'the loss of income is the most immediate and obvious consequence of becoming unemployed' and that 'the loss of work status is also a drastic consequence' (p.2). However, he

argues that 'the social consequences of unemployment can be made to appear much worse than they really are'; that 'most [unemployed] cope in reduced circumstances'. He comments that:

> Original studies of the unemployed in Australia give a more balanced picture of what unemployment implies. Both Jordan[3] (1975) and Brewer (1975,[4] 1982[5]) conducted in-depth interviews with small samples of unemployed people. From these, the picture that emerges certainly points to deprivation in many respects, but one also notes the capability of unemployed people to adjust to and cope with their unemployment. (p.1)

These conclusions do not seem to accord well with the findings of a range of studies on unemployment and its effects.

One of the earliest studies, by Brewer for the Brotherhood of St Laurence in 1975, is one of those cited by Stromback. Brewer comments:

> Unemployed persons in the survey commonly expressed feelings of boredom through being without a regular occupation; frustration at not being able to get back into the work force; and perplexity about their declining financial position and their loss of financial independence.[4]

Later studies by Brewer amplify the comment. Drawing on a series of interviews with jobless people (again for the Brotherhood of St Laurence), Brewer reported in 1980 (83):

> The majority of unemployed people have either not been able to enter the full-time workforce and earn a wage since leaving school or, prior to the onset of their unemployment,have been in jobs that command only a low wage. Few, therefore, have any economic buffer against unemployment and those with savings usually exhaust them within a couple of weeks of being out of work ...
>
> A minority of unemployed people seem to be protected against poverty through living with their parents and paying a small amount in board. However, many of these young people have been forced to leave school prematurely to help support family finances and their continuing economic dependence irks them and imposes a financial drain on their parents. Many young unemployed people, of course, live independently and fend for themselves. And among them, even those sharing household expenses are extremely hard put to survive on the meagre unemployment benefit they receive. Most of the jobless are adults, often with family commitments. Like the rest of us they have planned their expenditure on the basis of their expected weekly income. When that income is sharply eroded they are readily cast into indebtedness and turmoil. Housing security is jeopardised, social life is cut right back, boredom and depression frequently ensue, job seeking becomes difficult and financial independence is surrendered, spawning anxiety and humiliation. (p.38)

In a further study in the Frankston area of Melbourne in 1982 (also cited by Stromback), Brewer (83/AB:17) commented on the high incidence of unemployment among the close relatives of the unemployed in the study. He

notes again that most depended on unemployment or supporting parents benefits and few had savings to buffer them against loss or drastic reduction of income. Those who had accumulated some savings had used them for home repayments and other necessities. Unemployment benefits fell far short of needs. The results are to be seen in expenditure patterns:

> Reductions in expenditure on food were common to all age and family groups. Virtually all families with dependent children cut back on their expenditure on food following the onset of unemployment. The reductions were over a wide range of foodstuffs from essentials like fruit and groceries to 'luxuries' such as biscuits and sweets. By far the most commonly reduced item of food was meat. People ate less food and poorer quality food.
>
> 'We eat virtually no meat. We have less tinned food and more spuds. We buy food at the Sunday markets where the vegetables are cheaper.'
>
> 'We've cut back on everything. We buy from day to day now rather than weekly.'
>
> 'We don't even eat spuds now; they're too dear. Tomatoes are too dear, too. We don't have breakfast now or meat, except the cheapest cuts for stews. And we have less bread and milk.'
>
> Especially for families with dependent children, being on unemployment benefit necessitated cutbacks on food and made it difficult to eat adequately or maintain a balanced diet.
>
> Unemployed people also frequently reported cutbacks on other items, particularly clothing and petrol. Social outings were severely reduced; school fees or pocket money for the children became hard to meet; 'luxuries' like ice-cream, hairdressing and books were cut back, too. (p.16-17).

Smith, in a 1982 study of 90 low income families in Sydney (83/AB: 45), including twenty who were unemployed, invalid or sick, examined in detail the day-to-day implications of living on a low income. Chapter 5 documents the struggle of such families to make ends meet. Recreation and school excursions for children were among the first things to be cut out, and these had significant effects on health and family relationships. Living generally was 'hand-to-mouth' without opportunity for saving or providing reserves for emergencies. Almost all the families were forced to buy the cheapest and often less nutritious foods and those worst off, to skip meals to provide for other needs. Clothing was generally second-hand and inadequate or supplied by emergency relief. Risks were taken with health because of the direct and associated costs involved. Housing and transport were major problems.

Burbidge, from his survey of Turkish unemployed people in Melbourne (84/AB:24), reports that 'Most (66 per cent) said that either lack of money or financial insecurity was the worst thing about being unemployed' (p.13). Among the Italians in his survey, more than half (59 per cent) reported economic problems 'arising from unemployment and living on unemployment benefits. Bills other than food and accommodation tended to be the most troublesome ... with almost half the sample reporting this problem. Almost two-thirds of people living alone reported problems of

meeting the cost of rent or repayments, and three-quarters had problems with "other bills"' (p.58-59).

The same picture is presented in other studies (see, for example, Alderson 845; Turner 84/AB:23; Watson 84/AB:171). It is also in accordance with U.K. findings. Harris (84/AB:162) in his review of research cites a 1983 paper by Jonathan Bradshaw in the Journal of Social Policy. This paper on The Impact of Unemployment on the Living Standards of Families takes the results of the 1978-79 Family Finance Survey (which covered only families living on less than 140 per cent of Supplementary Benefits) to find out how the living standards of those who had been unemployed for over a year compared with the poorest employed families. Harris comments:

> The general picture, supported by a 1982 Economist Intelligence Unit report, is of a more housebound family,unable to afford trips to pub, cinema, relations or friends, and unable even to phone them up. They watch a lot of television, smoke too much and have to spend too much money on launderettes, pay phones, food from the corner shop and electric fires. (p.88)

The realities for the individual are expressed in Eva's words in Turner's study Stuck (83/AB:23):

> I was on the dole then but that was not enough. I was only getting $36 a week. My board was $20 a week and my food was ten and then there was gas, electricity, etc. So that was just all taken up to eat and to live. I couldn't go out or buy anything like clothes. Little things like shampoo, or toilet paper were a struggle to buy till I got the extra job. Then I was able to buy a heater for my room. I worked there about six months. I had to have that money just to live. I couldn't afford to have it taken so I didn't declare it.
>
> The people at the children's home knew my situation, that I was really scraping. They gave me cash in hand and didn't worry. They said if anyone asked they'd just say I was a voluntary helper. I had to survive - you can't live on $36 a week. (p.183-184).

Inadequate means has subsidiary effects. Lack of money for transport curtails the search for employment (Brewer 831), particularly when public transport is also inadequate (Brewer 83/AB:17). The difficulties of meeting house repayments or rents have already been mentioned, but for young people the problem may in many cases be the lack of any shelter at all. The report on youth Homelessness and Emergency Accommodation Services, One Step Forward (83/C:49) comments:

> Many of the youth do not receive any form of support from the family. When combined with an inability to obtain employment they are then unable to support themselves, and become homeless. Others who have been independent of the family and supporting themselves, become homeless when they lose employment and receive Social Security benefits which are not adequate to maintain their income at a level sufficient to support their needs. Unemployment, with the low level of income which accompanies it, is the most important factor contributing to the homelessness of the majority of the users. It reduces

> access to independent housing and exacerbates the vulnerability of adolescents to personal crises.
>
> For a significant proportion of the users inability to obtain housing is their principal problem. They experience difficulty in obtaining housing because of insufficient income (due to unemployment), landlords' prejudice, legal limitations and the unavailability of suitable housing. (p.8)

The picture which emerges from all this has been summed up by Smith in her ACOSS study, Living on the Edge (83/AB:45). She summarises the findings of her research in these terms:

> In summary the study showed that all families in the study were financially stretched to their limits, with the majority having to borrow money to make ends meet.
>
> It was apparent that recreation activities were the first to be cut out and families from all income groupings in the study had stopped their children going on school excursions. The implications for health and family relationships were significant and commented upon by virtually all families.
>
> Almost all families in the survey were also forced to substitute the cheapest and often less nutritious foods into their diets; and families from all income groupings were forced to defer health care because of costs.
>
> It was clear however that the poverty line does reflect a benchmark or range of income at which emergency situations occurred. For example, those living under or at the poverty line were much more likely to require emergency relief and/or face other legal difficulties e.g. having their goods repossessed, having to move house because they could not pay the rent or the house was condemned, having their electricity disconnected.
>
> It was those living under or close to the poverty line who had to skip meals altogether because of cost, miss school, always buy second hand clothes and have their children leave home because of cost.
>
> Indeed it was almost inevitable that those families living at or up to around 120 per cent of the poverty line were placed in some crisis situations and ongoing risk. Their lives represented a continuous state of juggling to make ends meet, punctuated by periodic crises. (p.148-49)

In the last decade, unemployment has been concentrated among those people in the community with the fewest resources available to cope with its effect; that is, on those groups who appear in all the literature and statistics as disadvantaged. Stromback (84/AB:164) argues that, though loss of income can be a drastic effect of becoming unemployed 'there is no reason to believe that the low income of the unemployed is the underlying cause of all their problems' (p.2). There is no arguing with a statement as sweeping as this; but equally there is ample evidence that, for these people, unemployment and inadequate income exacerbate the disadvantages which may rise from other causes. As the House of Lords Report (83/AB:36) concludes in its section on the financial costs of unemployment:

> Last, but by no means least, among the financial costs of unemployment are the personal burdens which it lays on the unemployed and their families. They are very harsh. They also merge with the social cost which we discuss in the next Chapter. We consider that it would be insulting to quantify them in monetary terms. It is enough to comment that these add a substantial amount to the total cost of unemployment. (p.51)

The Psychological Effects of Unemployment

The effects of unemployment go well beyond the financial hardships. The close association between work and income, on the one hand, and status and identity, on the other, have already been discussed. For a great many people - perhaps for most people - loss or lack of work means also the undermining and eventual loss of identity, self-esteem and purposefulness. These effects are reflected in feelings of guilt or shame; a bravado to cover up; social isolation; boredom and inactivity. The extremes of the process are depression, psychiatric disorder and suicide.

A number of researchers have reviewed the research which has been done on the psychological effects of unemployment. Most of these reviews have been as background to reports of particular studies, but some have been undertaken to assess what information is available and what findings can be made. Among the earliest of these reviews were the comments of Gurney and Taylor in 1980 (819) which indicated that knowledge of the psychological impact of unemployment was far from satisfactory. They pointed out that studies conducted in the 1930s could not be taken as indications of effects today partly because of research designs and methodologies, but also because 'socio-economic conditions have changed so much since the 1930s that it seems unlikely that unemployment now has the same meanings, either for the jobless or for society, as a whole, that it had fifty years ago' (p.1). A recent paper by Taylor and Gurney (84/AB: 161) acknowledges that 'to some extent, better research has been reported in the intervening four years' (p.2); it goes on to review what research has been done, concluding however that 'the small amount of psychological research on many of its [unemployment] aspects is puzzling. The problem deserves more than a flurry of impulsive and superficial surveys, however, since its social and psychological dimensions are complex' (p.15).

Stromback (84/AB:164) concludes from his review of the research evidence that 'it is certainly well established that unemployment is associated with some psychological ill-effects' (p.23), but goes on to argue:

> But while there is a reasonable degree of agreement about gross effects (depression, stress) others are more difficult to come to grips with. In themselves other effects may appear less important but they are an integral part of cross-section analysis. Not all unemployed are depressed, and as causality cannot be inferred, exploring the strength of the linkages between various effects provide clues to why the unemployed are different from employed people. (p.24)

As a preface to their survey of psychiatric disorder among the young unemployed of Canberra, Finlay-Jones and Eckhardt (84/AB:27) review the available literature on the effects of unemployment on suicide rates,

mental hospitalisation and mental health. They point out some of the difficulties of identifying unemployment as a cause of psychiatric disorder:

> Because we are dealing with the 'soft' facts of the social sciences (as opposed to the hard facts said to adorn the world of natural science), many people will throw up their hands in horror at the presumption of trying to show anything causes anything else in this area. They will begin to mutter, for example, that unemployment is neither a necessary nor a sufficient precursor of psychiatric disorder, and what kind of a cause is that? (p.12)

The reply to this is that no one would seriously maintain 'that all the states of depression found in the world were due solely to unemployment' or that 'unemployment always caused psychiatric disorder'. They argue the need for a 'less rigid notion of causality which is more appropriate to the social sciences':

> Instead of adopting a rigid definition of a cause along the lines of "B must always follow A, and B must never occur in the absence of A", these people are intuitively accepting a "statistical" notion of cause ("B sometimes follows A; not always, but often enough to be in some way 'important'") and they are also adopting a multifactorial view of causality ("A is a cause of B, but so are C,D, and E causes of B"). (p.13)

With this definition of causality, the question 'Does unemployment cause psychiatric disorder? can at least be addressed' (p.13)

Tiggemann in a recent paper (84/AB:173) also reviews various kinds of studies, reporting that 'it seems quite clear from cross-sectional evidence that the psychological correlates of unemployment are extremely negative' (p.4) and concluding that 'work still needs to be done on long-term unemployment'(p.4). She notes that longitudinal studies are still scarce:

> Still scarce are longitudinal studies. Cross-section designs taking measures at a fixed point in time, however, cannot establish that any observed differences are direct effects of unemployment per se. Only some kind of longitudinal design can establish whether it is unemployment that produces depression, for example, or whether it is the initially depressed who subsequently become unemployed. (p.4)

The process of deterioration is outlined in a diagram taken from an article by Richard Harrison in the U.K. Employment Gazette (April 1976).[7] The 1981 ACOSS publication, Work or the Want of It (B71) reproduces this diagram and describes the process:

> The diagram illustrates the process of initial shock or disorientation on becoming unemployed, which is followed by an active search for a job. The person is still optimistic and unresigned. As this situation continues, however, boredom, restlessness and pessimism are the keynotes, together with increased financial and social pressures. The person experiences the need to find something to occupy his time, but is limited by financial considerations - even odd jobs around

> the house cost money. The frustrations associated with this boredom coupled with such things as stigma, social embarrassment and irritability lead to anxiety and depression and so to further withdrawal from social contact.
>
> The cycle is then set - a lowering of self-esteem resulting from the social and personal consequence of unemployment, leading to a general social debility, aggravated in periods of particularly high employment, by the frustration of the futility of seeking employment. A further lowering of self-esteem results, and a decay of work habits and skills follows. (p.42)

The realities of the process are demonstrated in the case study work described by Brewer in Out of Work, Out of Sight (831). He sums up the experiences:

> All of the people interviewed in this study shared the experience of unemployment. But, in bringing their own unique personality and history to bear upon that situation, reactions to unemployment were not entirely uniform. Nonetheless, certain effects of unemployment were repeated across the sample group. People's pattern of responses to unemployment showed a good deal of conformity and closely resembled the pattern observed in earlier studies of unemployment.
>
> Generally speaking, people were shocked that they should be rendered jobless or that it should take them so long to complete successfully the transition from school to work. Vigorous job-seeking eventually gave way to dejection and a sense of hopelessness. A temporary display of bravado in the midst of this pattern was often evident. There were also intermittent periods of creative use of one's time and formulation of new plans. But, as job hopes grew dim, so boredom and aimlessness became more salient. In the case of protracted unemployment, quite alarming social psychological repercussions were often noted. Although some people grew angry about the cause of their situation, despair and depression were much more common symptoms. Fear about their own (and their children's) future, without work, often reached acute levels. (p.45-47)

Brewer (above) and others make the point that not everybody reacts in the same way to being unemployed. Effects vary depending on factors such as age, sex, previous attainments, family/social/group support, ability to organise and use time, financial situation and length of unemployment. Warr, writing of U.K. research (84/AB:167), notes that:

> In one recent study of almost 1000 unemployed men, a fifth of the sample reported psychological deterioration since losing their job. The changes they described were increased anxiety, depression, insomnia, irritability, lack of confidence, listlessness, inability to concentrate, and general nervousness. The vast majority of people reporting such changes for the worse indicated that these were directly associated with their being unemployed ... However, it was interesting to find that 8 per cent reported an improvement in psychological health. In almost all cases this was described as coming about because people were now free from the stresses of their paid jobs. A small minority of people may thus in

certain respects benefit from becoming unemployed.

> My conclusion from these and several other studies is that moving from paid work into unemployment yields an overall very significant reduction in psychological wellbeing. However, despite a substantial overall shift, not everyone is affected negatively when they become unemployed. (p.306)

Australian studies also show variations. Viney (B122), for example, reports from her study of compared groups in Wollongong, NSW, that the pattern of reaction

> ... was found to vary with some of the factors on which the unemployed people differed. Age seemed to be the most important of these, followed by sex and educational status. Women who were also relatively better educated showed as much alienation as the other unemployed people in most types of relationships but continued to enjoy some intimacy. Older, less educated men, in contrast, while showing less alienation from other relationships expressed little enjoyment of intimate relationships. Financial responsibilities also proved to be associated with a variation of the general pattern. The pattern for those unemployed people with greater financial responsibilities, in the form of dependent children and higher rental commitments, was dominated by anxiety, anger and, again, alienation. Those with fewer responsibilities showed less anxiety, anger and alienation. Employment-related factors - whether people had had work experience, the length of their present period of unemployment and their readiness to move to another city to gain a job - did not appear to have any relevance for the pattern of psychological and social reaction identified here. (p.11)

From Viney's account, however, the general pattern of reaction is clear:

> It seems that the unemployment experience, for this group of unemployed at least, was a stressful one. They were not uncertain about what was happening to them. Many of them gave clear and accurate accounts of their current roles in society. They showed, however, the alienation of lost links with their community. They expressed anger which may have been induced by alienation-related frustration but also frustration at their lack of routines and established life style. They also expressed anxiety, guilt, shame, depression and helplessness which may have stemmed from the lack of identity sometimes associated with alienation. They expressed the loneliness of few rewarding interpersonal interactions. Yet, in spite of this, they managed to maintain feelings of competence and self-confidence. (p.10)

Van Moorst (84/AB:165), drawing on his survey of the 286 unemployed people in his sample of 1,000 people in metropolitan Melbourne, reported that the majority of respondents (57 per cent), particularly the young and those from low socio-economic background indicated feelings of guilt about unemployment. Those who felt most guilt were also more work-oriented and more bored; they had more resource problems, pressures from friends and families and personal problems. They also tended to blame their own lack of skills for their situation. Apart from looking for work, the unemployed spent most of their time at home. Their activities were

generally sex stereotyped: cooking, sewing, etc. for women; wood/metal-work, vehicle repair, etc. for men. Watching television is a significant activity (4-6 hours daily for 37 per cent). Boredom is a serious problem for the young, the single, the less qualified and schooled, those from lower socio-economic suburbs. Many of them want opportunities to get away from home more and out of the city. This particularly applied to the young and to women - those with the least access to the resources and transport which would allow more varied use of time. The report concludes that the unemployed suffer problems of guilt, alienation and inadequate resources which, combined with the hopeless but necessary task of looking for work, prevent them from using their leisure more effectively.

The Italians in Burbidge's Melbourne study (84/AB:24) showed similar reactions:

> As well as the loss of dignity and self-esteem, many respondents spoke of the depression arising from boredom. For a 60 year old man the worst thing about being unemployed was "being at home and not having anything to do ... I just stay at home and feel that my life is finished". A 16 year old described how he filled in the day: "I read the paper, smoke, read books, listen to the news and help my brother and sister with their home-work". "The worst thing for me being unemployed is that I get bored", he said. (p.58)

The reality for country girls is expressed by 18 year old Reesy in What About Me? (Prior, Wallace and Carr 84/AB:166):

> I've been trying for jobs ever since I had three months training in a take-away shop. There are not many around now. You ring up - even if you see it the same day and they say, "Sorry, we can't fit you in - too many" or "it's already taken". You've got to be quick.
>
> Sometimes you feel like you just want to give up but you can't. You need the money because you can't get out, can't move out, can't be your own person. You've got to stay at home and rely on your parents a lot. You get grouchy. They don't understand and to get away, it's pretty hard to do.
>
> I try to sleep half the day if I can.
>
> If you sleep most of your day away you get out of that boredom habit. Then I've got the housework to do, if not that I visit some friends or do whatever I've got to do down town. It's mostly housework all day and bits and pieces.
>
> Most of my friends are unemployed, 'cos we're all getting older and it's not getting easier as there are less jobs going around.
>
> Because you're getting older, it's becoming more expensive for the employer to pay you. If they get a 15 or 16 year old, it's $15 more profit they're getting. (p.4-5)

Presdee (B67) saw something of the same reality for young women in his South Australian study:

> The culture of the unemployed is then woven around that very economic paucity but for the young it has further consequences for it bars them from the more glamorous world of youth that is predicted upon the successful entry into production and wage earning. As a result, and due to a lack of finance, the normal elements of "fantasy and fetish" are by and large absent from their culture. The anticipation of the form of future relationships gradually disappears resulting in a restricted view of the future in which stable relationships are not a part. I did not find great ambitions for marriage, nor great fantastic scenarios for the future, as I had done amongst school leavers, for these young women the future stopped at simply a job.
>
> Their future lives are then a big uncertainty, with their present existence a continual battle against being pushed to the isolation of the margins of social life and, for some young women, this normal peripheral characteristic of unemployment if further exacerbated by its tendency to absorb them into a deeper isolation of housework. (p.5-6)

A number of Australian studies have set out to produce harder evidence of the psychological effects of unemployment than can be inferred from self-reporting in surveys and case studies. One of the most significant of these was the 1982 study by Finlay-Jones and Eckhardt, A Survey of Psychiatric Disorders Among the Young Unemployed of Canberra (84/AB:27). Using a standardised General Health Questionnaire (GHQ) designed to detect states of anxiety and depression of recent onset, the researchers assessed that 56 per cent of the 401 unemployed persons between 16 and 24 years in the sample were psychiatric 'cases' - the highest case rate ever reported outside a hospital clinic and comparing with a community sample rate of 10-12 per cent. Three-quarters of the psychiatric disorders were states of depression; the remainder, states of anxiety. The report estimates that, for every 10 cases of psychiatric disorder detected, about 4 have become cases after 6 months unemployment; 2 after two months and under the stress of some other incident in their lives; another develops symptoms after about 1 year of unemployment, probably as a result of some other stressful incident, and 3 were ill before becoming unemployed.

Those most at risk were found to be women (56 per cent to 43 per cent); men and women who had been dismissed from their jobs; women who had resigned from jobs; men who had no ready access to even trifling sums of money for borrowing ($100) or who had debts.

The difficulties of this kind of survey limit the firm conclusions that can be drawn, but the report claims its results as showing that unemployment is a potent social determinant of psychiatric disorder.

Feather, in South Australia (84/AB:25), set out to explore the correlation of unemployment with a number of variables including depressive symptoms, comparing young people in two groups; employed and unemployed. The study found that unemployed males and females tended to report more depressive symptoms and to be lower in self-esteem than the employed young people. Unemployed males also had lower Protestant Ethic (PE) scores and lower scores for both good and bad events, compared with employed males. Both lower self-esteem and less effort to find a job were associated with increasing time out of work. The active search for work

was associated with higher self-esteem, stronger PE values and lower apathy. This seems to indicate that continued unemployment affects the person in ways which reduce the probability of finding a job.

A later study by Feather of Time Structure and Purposeful Activity among Employed and Unemployed Graduates in South Australia (84/AB::175) found that graduates in the unemployed sample were less organised and less purposeful in their use of time and reported more depressive symptoms than did graduates in the employed sample. In both groups structured and purposeful use of time was positively associated with self-esteem and negatively associated with depressive symptoms. Female respondents reported higher employment importance and more use of a routine, but their self-esteem scores were lower than were those of male respondents.

A few studies have focused particularly on school leavers. Field and Sullivan (832) in 1980 surveyed 1979 school leavers in Brunswick (Victoria). They reported:

> The dramatically different effects of getting a job or being unemployed, and the effect this has on a person's self-confidence, is clearly shown in the responses from the school-leavers surveyed.
>
> 66% of school-leavers with jobs reported that they had more/much more self-confidence since leaving school, whereas only 17.3% who were unemployed reported the same. 30.4% of school-leavers who were unemployed reported that they had less/much less self-confidence since leaving school, compared to 3.4% of school leavers who had jobs. This clearly reflects the personal rewards that come from getting a job and obtaining entrance into the adult world of work. What was also clearly demonstrated was that the longer the period of time spent unemployed, the more the school-leaver suffered a deterioration in self-confidence.
>
> Following on from this, are the different perceptions held by males and females about the effects that unemployment have upon them. Males tend to lose more self-confidence after periods of unemployment than females do. This appears to be representative of community attitudes and the greater emphasis put on males getting work than females. Sexism is a two-edged sword: females suffer greater disadvantage when trying to get a job, males experience greater personal problems when they can't get one. (p.39)

One of the earliest studies of unemployed school leavers by Gurney and Taylor (834) reported more complex findings, some of them of an unexpected nature. Employed school leavers showed significant increase in self-esteem. This was particularly so for girls, and these while at school had shown lower self-esteem than had corresponding male students. Those students who returned to school or were unemployed showed no increase in psycho-social development, but neither did they show a significant decrease. This might have been because the period of unemployment at the time of the follow-up survey was still short (four months). School students surveyed tended to attribute unemployment to external factors and unemployed school leavers also favoured external explanations. Employed school leavers, on the other hand, seemed to change their attribution of unemployment, focusing on personal reasons such as lack of skills, poor motivation and timid effort.

Discussing these results in an article in the Journal of Occupational Psychology in 1980, Gurney (834) commented:

> The results and interpretations presented are limited by the still "unpolished" state of the inventory used, and the relatively short duration of unemployment experienced by the respondents. But, given these constraints, it seems reasonable to conclude that unemployment has the effect of inhibiting development in school-leavers, rather than of inflicting trauma as is sometimes popularly supposed. This type of impact has also been observed in other results, such as with self-esteem (Gurney, 1980) and work-values (Dowling, 1978). In each case the dependent variable showed an increase for employed persons, but no change for the unemployed. There is a need for further research to trace psycho-social development across a period encompassing the transition from school to tertiary institute to work so that both the "normal" transition and the impact of unemployment might be better understood. (p.212)

By far the most significant and authoritative research into the psychological effects of unemployment on school leavers is the ongoing longitudinal study in South Australia by Winefield, Tiggemann and Delin mentioned earlier. The conduct and findings of the study have been reported in the Abstracts mentioned earlier; they have also been described in an article by Tiggemann and Winefield in the Clearinghouse Newsletter (now Bulletin), August 1983 [p.17-22]. These papers essentially report the findings from the analyses of the 1980 and 1981 surveys of school students and leavers. A recent paper by Tiggemann and Winefield (84/AB: 172) sums up the results:

> The main conclusion from this study is that unemployment does have significant psychological consequences for the young person. It has demonstrated that the young unemployed are, in general, less well-adjusted than their employed counterparts. They reported greater negative mood in terms of boredom, unhappiness and helplessness, all of which can be considered as reasonably transient states. They also scored less favourably on recognised psychological scales which are likely to measure more stable aspects of personality. Specifically, the unemployed scored lower on self-esteem (especially the girls), and higher on depressive affect, than the employed. Furthermore, unlike most previous studies, the design employed here provided evidence that these psychological effects were attributable to the unemployment (or employment) experience.
>
> These psychological consequences were, however, often of an unexpected kind which, once again, could only be disentangled by a longitudinal research design. Thus, with respect to the mood questions, although loss of happiness and increased helplessness appeared to be a function of the unemployment experience, it was those who gained employment who experienced reduced boredom and helplessness.
>
> Similarly, the observed difference in self-esteem between the employed and the unemployed was due, not to a decrease in self-esteem on the part of the unemployed, but rather to a larger increase among those who obtained jobs. (p.40)

The paper goes on to indicate the possibility that the length of unemployment experienced may not have been sufficient for some differences to appear:

> Although measurements were taken eight to nine months after school ended, and the modal length of unemployment reported was greater than six months, this still may not be sufficient experience of unemployment for all effects to emerge, especially given that school-leavers may consider the first few months following school as a "holiday".
>
> Whatever the case, it does appear that school-leavers form a special group and findings from older workers may not generalise to them. On reflection, it is not really surprising that not finding a job should produce different consequences from losing one. The school-leaver who fails to obtain a job is presumably in much the same position of dependence as he or she was as a pupil, with little objective change. It is the school-leaver who obtains a job, on the other hand, who experiences a significant change in status. (p.40)

Tiggemann (84/AB:173) cautions:

> Such a finding should not, however, allow us to become complacent. The results are consistent with a notion of paid work leading to growth rather than of unemployment leading to debilitation. For these young people, getting a job, still the 'normal' and desired option in our society, provided something valuable for their identity and self-concept, something which the unemployed missed. Such a retardation of 'normal' development is hardly a pleasant finding. It appears that the unemployed individual is not given the same opportunity to grow and develop as his employed counterpart. Unemployment appears to inhibit development in school-leavers. (p.13)

From this overview of the research into the psychological effects of unemployment two incontrovertible findings emerge:

- that the experience of unemployment does have a deleterious effect on most people, though patterns and degree of effect may vary
- that a great deal more sustained and co-ordinated research is necessary if the psychological effects of unemployment are to be understood.

Finlay-Jones and Eckhardt (84/AB:27) question 'the assumption that there is one single thing called 'unemployment' arguing that there are many aspects of unemployment which will affect different people in different ways. They suggest three in particular:

- the personal meaning of being dismissed rather than being one of many retrenched or never getting a job after leaving school
- the psychological ramifications of not having enough money
- the crippling effect of boredom, of time on one's hands, of having nothing to do. (p.87)

As Taylor and Gurney (84/AB:161) comment: 'The problem [of psychological effects of unemployment] deserves more than a flurry of impulsive and superficial surveys' (p.15).

The Effects of Unemployment on Health, Suicide and Crime

Given the focus of the Clearinghouse on Education, Training and Employment of young people, it is not perhaps surprising that few studies have been collected on the effects of unemployment on health, suicide and crime. What should be surprising is that the paucity of our information appears to reflect fairly accurately the availability of clear and well-researched evidence in these areas, particularly in Australia.

Unemployment and Ill-Health

It is argued that the psychological effects of unemployment - the increased stress and tensions - have their further effect in reduced physical health, particularly where poverty, accompanying unemployment, leads to restricted diet and inadequate medical care.

The effects of inadequate income on food buying and diet has already been mentioned. The most detailed analysis of this aspect of poverty in the studies being reviewed is that contained in Chapter 5 of Smith's study Living on the Edge (83/AB:45).

The effects of unemployment on health were indicated by Brewer in his 1980 study of unemployed people (B31). He found that:

> ... as time passed, less healthy jobless people grew more preoccupied with their ailments and increasingly depressed about their personal and work future. Such feelings were reinforced by their setbacks while seeking work and by their developing awareness of the limited work options that were open to them. Instead of being full-time workers, with incidental physical ailments, they were inclined to see themselves as physically ill, ageing people with a 'workless' future. (p.11)

Further, he commented:

> It is important to note that even persistent ailments had not prevented full-time workforce participation until the unemployment situation worsened considerably. However, as the total number of jobs declined, ill health came to act as a barrier to re-employment. Healthier workers held a competitive edge in the clamour for jobs. Other researchers have made similar observations. (p.11)

In his later 1982 study (83/AB:17), he found that 'unemployed people commonly sought the cheapest form of medical treatment' (p.18). The fact that they had no health cover for dental, ambulance, optical or pharmaceutical costs 'deterred some people from seeking treatment' (p.18).

Smith also reports (83/AB:45) that:

> Over half (50) of the families said that they had deferred health care because of cost. This situation was apparent across all income groups and in fact was highest for those in the category 50-100% above the poverty line.
>
> Thus even those groups classified as 'socially disadvantaged' and provided with 'free' doctors and hospital care had to

> defer health care because of, for example, pharmaceutical costs. The areas most mentioned as being outside the reach of respondents were dental and eye care. These are provided to persons on a strict means test basis in some public hospitals, however waiting times of 6-9 months are not uncommon even for serious conditions. (p.146)

Taking a different aspect, Turtle (84/AB:169) set out to investigate the possible effect of continuing unemployment on health-related behaviours of young people under 25 years, using two comparison groups of short-term and long-term unemployed. The sample consisted of 100 young people (57 males; 43 females), selected by interviewers on four occasions in August 1980 from people entering and leaving the Liverpool (NSW) Commonwealth Employment Service (CES) office. Even with the qualifications necessary for cross-sectional analysis, the data indicated that young people unemployed for less than five months are differentiated from those unemployed for longer, particularly in relation to sporting, drinking, smoking, sleeping and eating habits, level of social mixing and experience of general health. The long-term unemployed group were characterised by heavier smoking, reduced participation in sport and, though not statistically significant, increased drug usage. Among them, females were drinking more and visiting the doctor more; males were showing, in a variety of behaviours, withdrawal from social contact.

This kind of evidence indicates the **potential** for unemployment to undermine health directly or indirectly, but the limitations of the studies make it impossible to demonstrate that unemployment directly **causes** ill-health. What has been established and widely accepted is that there is a definite association between unemployment and ill-health.

Kerr, in an article in Social Alternatives September/October 1983 (84/AB:167), provides a detailed review and discussion of the available evidence on unemployment and ill-health. He comments:

> One thing is certain - that the average level of health in groups of unemployed persons is worse than in those who work. Certain relationships constantly recur in western industrialised societies - a strong correlation between unemployment experience and the incidence of poverty both in individuals and geographical areas and an equally high correlation between poverty and increased mortality and morbidity rates. It is easy to derive statistical relationships which fit these data and appear to explain the observed variance but which have no causal significance. (p.3)

Kerr discusses the various kinds of research (mainly overseas) which, taken together, establish an association between unemployment and ill-health. He points out that neither cross-sectional surveys nor longitudinal studies can establish that the link between unemployment and health is a causal one. Brenner's type of multivariate time-series studies has different but equally problematic limitations. Kerr concludes:

> The present consensus appears to be that, at best, time-series studies support the conclusions of cross-sectional surveys by demonstrating increased morbidity and mortality among the unemployed. Claims for causal links are not widely supported because the models do not adequately account for colinearity

> of variables other than unemployment which are linked with ill-health. (p.5)

The evidence, such as it is, thus remains inconclusive. Strombeck (84/AB:164) in his review of the effects of unemployment on health goes so far as to state that 'there is no credible evidence of any substantial effects, other than those on the psychological wellbeing of the unemployed. The conclusion that there are no other effects of unemployment does not follow, but on the whole the evidence points in this direction' (p.25).

On the other hand, the Select Committee of the House of Lords in the U.K. (83/AB:36) concluded its review of the evidence with the statement:

> We believe unemployment to be among the causes of ill-health, mortality, crime or civil disorder. Although this is an area where irrefutable proof is virtually impossible, we find the evidence highly indicative and we are satisfied that the link is sufficiently probable to allow the drawing of certain conclusions. We regard the connection as more than "plausible". (p.59)

And Kerr (84/AB:167) sums up his overview with the comment:

> A variety of methods has been used to study the relationship between unemployment and health. Frequently, information on health status has not been a primary objective and was generated as a side issue. Most investigations, including nearly all those undertaken in Australia, have been descriptive in nature and not designed to rigorously test causal hypotheses.
>
> Nevertheless, these studies combine to provide a powerful intuitive case for an increased rate of ill-health among unemployed individuals, their families and, in some cases, whole communities in economically depressed areas. (p.3)

Kerr also indicates some necessary action if the association of unemployment with ill-health is to be adequately explored:

> What then can be done? In the first place more precise information is required. That information is difficult to obtain in Australia which, unlike North America and many European countries, does not possess national data of sufficiently consistent quality to test the causal relationships postulated by Brenner and other exponents of multivariate time-series analysis. But there is adequate scope for for embarking on long-term cohort studies and exploiting some of the other more promising forms of experimental investigation to elucidate the nature and extent of health consequences among the Australian unemployed. As the issue will inevitably become prominent on the national political agenda, following the experiences of the Northern Hemisphere, there is no reason to delay the commencement of such investigations and the development of appropriate means by which they may be funded. (p.6-7)

Unemployment and Suicide

The House of Lords Report (83/AB:36), having reviewed evidence about unemployment and suicide rates, concluded:

> While figures about deliberate self-harm are to some extent concealed, statistics on suicide suggest some link with unemployment. Historic peaks of suicide coincide with periods of high unemployment: suicides of both men and women in England and Wales this century peaked in 1931. The decline in suicides (both in absolute terms and in relation to total deaths) over the 1960s and early 1970s was reversed from 1973. The Manpower Services Commission (MSC) however warn that it would not be appropriate for a generally valid conclusion to be reached on the relationship between unemployment and suicide because of the dearth of empirical and theoretical research. (p.56)

Kerr's review (84/AD:167) tells the same story - of inadequate information:

> Suicide has always been regarded as an increased hazard among the unemployed ever since Durkheim demonstrated its apparent sensitivity to adverse socio-economic conditions. Time-series and other trend analyses suggest strongly that unemployment rates are the most important and stable predictor of suicide rates in the U.S. and other industrialised societies. For the U.K. the long-term trends are not so clear-cut but there is strong circumstantial evidence for an unemployment effect in recent years. Since 1975 U.K. suicide rates have increased by 3 per cent a year, reversing a downward trend of the 1960s. Suicides are most frequent among young males in the lowest socio-economic class - the group which is also most vulnerable to unemployment; about half of all males who attempt suicide are unemployed (and have no history of mental illness) and there is a strong association between attempted and completed suicides.
>
> Some general similarities exist between the U.K. and Australian trends for suicide and unemployment, but as national Australian data on suicide do not record the employment status at time of death the comparison cannot be completed. A survey of attempted suicides in an urban and a provincial region of Victoria identified a very high incidence among the unemployed by comparison to those in work. (p.6)

Meares, in an article on adolescent suicide (83/AB:108), states that:

> In Australia, the suicide rate for adolescent males has doubled during the seventies ... that for adolescent girls remains unchanged. For the remainder of the male population the rise is paralleled only by men in their twenties. Otherwise, for middle-aged men the suicide rate remains about the same and in the older age groups is falling. (p.604)

As a means towards understanding these trends, the paper examines ABS statistics for Melbourne which provide figures showing the number of suicides for each age group in each local government area (LGA). The examination found that the highest rates of suicide for females are in the

inner suburbs, perhaps a result of isolation in flats and boarding houses (10.3 per cent in 1970-80); for young males, the highest rates (surprisingly) are in the affluent/respectable areas (20.8 per cent). The paper goes on to look at some previous research which indicates that a critical point of adolescence involves the 'engagement/disengagement' from the family in modes that may be 'binding' (when the family tries excessively to keep the child within the family nexus); expelling (when the child is no longer wanted); 'delegating'. The 'bound' males and the 'expelled' females may be the groups at risk of suicide, suggesting that in areas of high suicide rate there is likely to be an excessive number of young women living apart from their families, as indeed occurs in Melbourne inner suburbs and round St Kilda.

Commenting on the analysis, the paper says that:

> Unemployment is likely to be a factor in the recent rise in suicide of men between 20 and 24 because the largest increase is found in areas associated with the manufacturing industry. The figures for adolescence are too small to study in this way. Nevertheless there is a correlation between the unemployment and suicide rates in the group of males aged 15 to 19. This correlation ($r=0.55$) is significant at $P<0.05$. (The figures cover the years 1966 to 1980: we could find no earlier ones.) That the failure to find work should contribute to the suicide rate seems understandable since work influences personal identity for many people and provides them with a sense of usefulness and purpose. Young males, whose sense of identity is relatively precarious, may be particularly vulnerable. Such a correlation does not necessarily indicate a causal connection. Furthermore the Melbourne figures do not support the unemployment hypothesis, showing no rise at the midpoint in the decade when unemployment first became a significant problem. (p.615)

One can only agree with Stromback's conclusion (84/AB:164) that 'while speculative writings on this subject abound, there is no substantial empirical evidence and the causes of suicides remain as elusive as ever' (p.19).

Unemployment and Crime

Anecdotal evidence of the association of unemployment with crime is to be found in some of the case studies already mentioned in this review. Presdee, speaking of the girls in his South Australian study (B67), commented:

> But it is here, in the 'shop' culture, that the realities of poverty are worked out within a situation that demands a level of affluence that is beyond the reach of the unemployed. In these cases all were involved in shopping at some time, and for a few it was an important part of the week, so it was no surprise to find that the majority of those interviewed had been involved in shop lifting at some time, or as is the case of one group, who were very involved in shopping, had been accused of shop lifting. (p.8-9)

[See also Turner 83/AB:23, P.182-190]

Hard evidence of the association is, as in other areas, difficult to come by. Two studies by Clark and Clissold (84/AB:26), comparing groups of unemployed and employed young men, indicated that unemployment may increase the inclination of unemployed young men to engage in political activism and lawlessness.

Junankar, in a recent paper on Youth Unemployment and Youth Crime,[8] points out that there are considerable problems in researching the relationship between unemployment and crime. Among them is the fact that the concept and measurement of crime are closely tied to the social and political attitudes and legislation of a particular time and place. 'In other words, society determines which actions are deemed to be criminal' (p.2). Secondly, numbers of 'recorded' crimes will depend on the resources devoted to their investigation and the assiduousness with which the investigations are pursued. Thus, results based on econometric analysis need to be approached with caution. Junankar also goes on to comment:

> I should like to end this section by stressing that I do not believe that there are 'criminals' and 'lawabiding' people in society. There is a very thin line which divides legal and criminal activities: a personal telephone call from work by a professional white-collar employee is 'stealing' just as much as a shop assistant 'taking' a chocolate from the rack. A speeding motorist is breaking the law, just as much as a youth who smashes a telephone kiosk. However, "society" tends to view middle-class crime as being 'understandable' but working class crime as being abhorrent. The crimes committed by the young tend to be more "visible": 'drunk and disorderly', football hooliganism, drug abuse. Crimes by older people are likely to be more discreet. (p.3)

Using a simple model, Junankar provides some preliminary time series regression results for England and Wales, indicating that 'there appears to be a positive relation between youth unemployment and crime'. However, a more sophisticated model to take account of complexities such as lags and simultaneity is needed (p.17-18).

Braithwaite, in a 1978 paper presented to a seminar on Unemployment and Crime,[9] draws attention to the discrepancies in the results of different kinds of studies: 'cross-sectional studies show a strong positive correlation between crime and unemployment while time-series evidence is extraordinarily equivocal' (p.60).

The House of Lords Committee (83/AB:36) recognises the difficulties of establishing a causal link between unemployment and crime, but concludes:

> The shortage of money and surplus free time associated with unemployment may also lead to an increase in the incidence of crime. How far unemployment, or some other social, demographic or environmental factor associated with it, precipitates crime is virtually impossible to establish. Changing trends in recording crime and in sentencing policy complicate the statistics further. Nevertheless anecdotal evidence, supported by some research, appears to confirm a causal link; and unemployment provides both motive and opportunity for crime. (p.57)

The Committee goes further:

> Not only does crime increase with unemployment. So does the prison population; at a rate higher than that attributable to increased crime. This is because more convicted prisoners appear to be given custodial sentences and such sentences are longer ... Among the young, for every 1,000 increase in unemployment there is an increase of 56 young people sentenced to custody over and above the crime rate. (p.58)

The report continues:

> Unemployment was also a contributory factor to the riots of 1981, though not the sole cause. Whether unemployment contributed only indirectly as one of the features of inner city deprivation or more directly as a spur to violence, we cannot say. (p.59)

Braithwaite, in the paper mentioned above,[9] questions the simple association between crime and unemployment. He points out:

> It is obvious that unemployed people have more to feel relatively deprived about and have a higher reward-cost ratio for crime than the remainder of the population. But it is not equally obvious that during periods of high unemployment the average level of relative deprivation among the poorest section of the population will increase, and that the average reward-cost ratio for crime among these people will also increase. One reason for this is that periods of high unemployment are not necessarily periods of greater inequality. (p.57)

He argues that 'it is not so much the number who are poor in a society that is generative of crime as the income gap between rich and poor' (p.60). Further work is needed to test out this interpretation of the statistics, but if it were accepted it would have considerable policy implications. Braithwaite comments:

> It is, nevertheless, worth knowing that one of the consequences of living in a society with a wide gap between the rich and poor is that we must tolerate a high crime rate. It is also worth knowing that one of the many advantages of reforms within capitalism to reduce the income gap between rich and poor (such as restructuring the tax system, guaranteed minimum income, an egalitarian housing policy, or increased welfare benefits across the board) might be a reduction of this high crime rate. These are policies which narrow the income gap by lifting the minimum standard below which no people are allowed to fall by dint of unemployment or any other reason. We cannot have the same confidence about the effect on crime of piece-meal policies which help some poor individuals but leave others behind. (p.60)

The Youth Labour Market: Epilogue

This is the last paper in the series on the youth labour market - and a depressing task it has been. The review has highlighted the sketchiness of what we know about changing patterns of demand and supply in labour markets generally and in the youth labour market in particular. It has also indicated how reluctant we are, as a society, to face the policy implications of social and industrial change.

In the euphoria of lowered inflation rates, increasing employment vacancies and apparently stabilised unemployment rates, it may be easy to overlook some still grim facts of life. Some of these are indicated in the Australian Bureau of Statistics publication, The Labour Force, Australia. September 1984, Preliminary. In September, total employment, seasonally adjusted (s.a), rose by 27,000. This rise was, in fact, made up of an increase in part-time employment of 52,300 and a fall in full-time employment of 25,300. Seasonally adjusted unemployment remained at 628,000 (8.8 per cent). Of these, 528,400 (9.0 per cent) were looking for full-time work. And, of these, 136,000 were teenagers (15-19 years) for whom the unemployment rate was 24.1 per cent. Teenagers looking for their first full-time job in September 1984 numbered 67,900.

Dare we continue to slide over the fact that just on one in four teenagers in the workforce is unemployed? Can we ignore the reality that full-time job opportunities are declining?

Ten years after the onset of high unemployment, we appear still to be looking for simple causes and remedies, and waiting with Micawber-like optimism for the combination of circumstances which will solve the problem of unemployment. In the meanwhile, we continue the tradition of blaming the schools or youth wages or the personal qualities (now called disadvantage) of the young. We look for our remedies in more or better education and in programs of training and work experience which it is hoped will make the least well equipped more competitive in the race for jobs.

Education, training and work experience are all worthy initiatives, appropriate and commendable at any time. But they cannot, in honesty, be regarded as a contribution to solving the problem of unemployment. At best, they temporarily reduce the statistics and re-distribute what jobs there are at the bottom end of the occupational ladder. They do nothing to restore the permanent full-time jobs for young people which structural change in industry and in labour supply have been combining to phase out in the last decade.

It may be that, in time to come, we will again enjoy the benefits of full employment or whatever may fill its place in providing purposeful and satisfying living. But, as the House of Lords Select Committee on Employment points out:

> The unemployed ... cannot be left to wait for this golden tomorrow. There must be work today and training today. (83/AB:36,p.164)

If we are content to wait for full employment to come about by force of circumstances or by macro-policies on their own, we should at least be aware of what we are also accepting. Among the immediate consequences are the productive loss and the social costs of high levels of unemployment among successive generations of young people wanting to join the work-force. We are at present discarding one in four of them. Secondly, we

must be prepared to accept growing tensions between those in the community who are privileged to be in secure employment and those who are not - remembering that the numbers of the latter include not only those officially recorded as unemployed but also those who are under-employed and those who have dropped out of the labour force into hidden unemployment.

Thirdly, there is the long-term effect on the society. To accept high levels of unemployment and higher levels of youth unemployment as a fact of life is to accept a society as rigidly class-structured as any in history, though in a topsy-turvy way since the leisured class will be those at the bottom of the social ladder rather than at the top. Given the unequal distribution of unemployment and its concentration in particular groups, the leisured will be those forced to subsist in poverty on inadequate financial resources; those with the least personal and educational resources to use time effectively; those with little experience of success in a competitive society, with little self-confidence and sense of purpose; those most liable to drift into apathy, mental and physical ill-health and drug abuse, or alternatively to become resentful, frustrated, socially alienated and lawless.

It must be said that the outlook for constructive and coherent action is not hopeful. Despite the solid initial work done by the Department of Education and Youth Affairs in 1983, we have not yet managed to rationalise our hotch-potch of income support schemes for young people. The need to remove contradictions and make income support schemes consistent with government policies for participation and equity is not disputed by anyone. But the action to do it requires a degree of co-operation apparently difficult to achieve with our institutionalised decision-making process. There can be little hope in this experience for the more difficult task of designing a coherent youth policy covering education, training and employment. Even less can we hope for the framing of such a policy within an overall social policy which addresses the needs of all groups in a changing society.

There is no shortage of ideas on what should be done, as any glance through issues of the Clearinghouse Bulletin and Abstracts will indicate. There is no shortage of rhetoric to express our care and concern. There is a shortage of the will and capacity to take the rhetoric seriously and to put the ideas into practice.

The possibility (some would say probability) of 'jobless growth' - that the economy may grow while employment declines - has not been seriously faced. If it were, the implications would be seen to be far-reaching for policy and practice. We would need to examine our present concepts of 'productive' work and the role of work in the distribution of wealth; we would need to find more effective ways of distributing and/or generating employment; we might need to revise our attitudes to the 'work ethic' and provide a guaranteed minimum for all; we might even be forced to consider how to overcome the compartmented approach to policy-making and the institutional structures which seem always such barriers to coherent and co-operative policy-making. In other words, if we once recognised that the society is undergoing fundamental change equivalent to that of the nineteenth century, hopeful rhetoric and ad hoc action would be seen to be not enough.

It is appropriate that the unemployed themselves have the last words in this series.

You feel like you're on the end of a plank and someone's ready to push you off.

(Brewer 83/AB:17, p.34)

I don't believe this country or the government cares about us. We are like an unwanted child. They said we'd get jobs when we came here.

(Burbidge 84/AB:24, p.13)

My only problem really is lack of work and the shameful feeling of being classed not as a 'student', 'housewife' or 'shop assistant', but UNEMPLOYED. People tend to put you in your own little class. Especially people who work in shops, doctors' surgeries, etc.

(Prior et al. 84/AB:166,p.5)

But there's no point in studying if it doesn't get you a job. One of my girlfriends finished a four year arts course, and she can't find a job. This other girl I know, she is doing science and she can't find a job either. She has been to hospitals and everywhere - there is nothing - and everyone says, 'Oh you dole-bludgers'. But there aren't jobs so what are we supposed to do?

People should give us a chance. There are so many older people who are in jobs, like sixty and sixty-five. I don't think they should work anymore. I don't want to be jealous or mean because they have a job, but they should give us younger people a chance. We are the next generation, when they are gone it is up to us. If we haven't got any jobs and we are roaming the streets, Australia won't be a very good country.

(Turner 83/AB:23, p.63)

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COMMUNITY EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM: JOB CREATION OR WORK EXPERIENCE?

*by Moira Rowland**

The Department of Employment and Industrial Relations (DEIR) have just put out a report on the first year of the Community Employment Program (CEP), and although the Program seems only to have got under way in the last months of the financial year it is perhaps worth trying to assess what its achievements may be.

The CEP was announced as a job creation program in May 1983 and formally launched that August; it is scheduled to last three years, to the end of June 1986. Its predecessor, the Wage Pause Program (WPP), was set up by the Fraser Government in January 1983 and ran until the end of June 1984 (there were State job creation schemes, notably in Victoria, even before the WPP - see 84/C: 117). The Bureau of Labour Market Research (BLMR) published an interim report on the WPP in January but a final report is not expected until next year.

Objectives of the CEP

When introducing the Community Employment Bill on 19 May 1983, Mr Willis described it as the initial step towards 'action to create worthwhile employment opportunities' and he repeatedly emphasised that the CEP was to be a job creation program. He also said that the Government would 'adopt a two-fold approach ... through action first to create jobs and second to provide the unemployed with the training needed to fill the jobs which will be created through a sustained economic recovery'. The jobs provided were to be 'worthwhile and productive' and 'on projects of social and economic benefit to the community'. He remarked, 'It should be painfully evident to honourable members that there is a vast amount of such ... work which needs to be done in Australia'.

The Program was to be aimed in particular 'at those most disadvantaged among the ranks of the unemployed'; those eligible for participation 'must be Commonwealth Employment Service registrants who have been out of work for at least three months, with priority then being given to those who have been unemployed for at least nine months; those who have never worked - particularly the very disadvantaged of the labour market such as Aborigines - and those for other reasons in need of immediate employment. Equal access should be provided for females ...'. Mr Willis admitted that the Wage Pause Program had similar provisions but said that the CEP would be 'more tightly targeted to those most disadvantaged'. (It should be noted, incidentally that, unlike part of the WPP, the CEP is not aimed at young people as such.)

The Program was to run for three years and Mr Willis spoke of generating 'a level of activity under this Program in 1983-84 consistent with supporting in a full year up to 70,000 full-time jobs for an average duration of six months', but he added that 'up to twice the number of jobs can be expected to be created indirectly by the increased demand for goods

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and services and the higher incomes resulting from implementing the Program'.

A year later (6 June, 1984) the Minister told the House: 'The fundamental purpose of the CEP is to assist the most disadvantaged ... in obtaining permanent employment in the general labour market' and that 'it aims to do this by providing work experience, and where possible training, on worthwhile projects, and thereby acting as an important "stepping stone" for these people to get back into the general workforce'.

Mr Willis stressed that the CEP was not intended to be a 'direct source of permanent jobs'; this was not, however, to deny that some CEP projects 'will have the potential to be self-sustaining and create ongoing employment. Indeed, priority is given to such projects ...'. It was imperative that 'the priority objective should be to assist as many of the disadvantaged unemployed as possible ... rather than support a much lower number of people in permanent jobs'. The goal of creating permanent long-term jobs 'is more appropriately pursued through general policies of economic stimulus, together with specific measures aimed directly at encouraging new forms of permanent job creation', and Mr Willis added that the Government is considering options in the latter category.

As for 'the vast amount of worthwhile and productive work which needs to be done in Australia' to which Mr Willis drew attention in 1983, this was, twelve months later, reduced to 'worthwhile community services and facilities' which were 'an important element in the program' and not the primary objective; CEP 'is not designed to provide ongoing funding for community services or other activities'.

The next statement of CEP objectives is to be found in the paper put out by the DEIR at the time of the budget, in August 1984. This carefully repeats what Mr Willis said in June, the fundamental purpose of CEP is 'to assist the most disadvantaged in obtaining permanent employment in the general labour market ... by providing work experience'. The same words are in the DEIR's report on the Program's first year, which adds that 'the underlying premise is that participation .. will help to break the link between long-term unemployment and its damaging consequence on the chance of getting a regular job'.

Thus what seemingly started out as a job creation scheme is now explicitly regarded as another work experience program. Jobs are still to be created, but the purpose of the scheme is not their creation but the experience they provide. If they prove to be self-sustaining that is fortunate; continuing CEP funding cannot be guaranteed and in any case no individual can be funded for more than twelve months. Not even Mr Willis himself continues to argue that the expenditures on the scheme, and the higher incomes associated with it will create as many more indirect jobs as those created directly.

What you think of this shift in emphasis probably depends on what you think about the future of the labour market and whether you believe that what is most needed is to train the unemployed so they can 'fill the jobs which will be created through a sustained economic recovery'. If you have a sinking feeling that the way the economy is being restructured means that there are unlikely to be enough jobs however 'sustained' the recovery, then you may wish to see some of those 'specific measures aimed directly at encouraging new forms of permanent job creation', mentioned by Mr Willis in June (see Keith Windschuttle's article on CEP - 84/C: 121).

But in any case, the CEP is continuing for another eighteen months, and even if it is not involved in 'permanent job creation' is can still be useful.

Possible Benefits from the CEP

First there is a good chance that most of the jobs funded by the Program will be 'new' or extra ones, which has certainly not been the case with other programs providing work experience (the WPP seems an honourable exception). This means that there will be a net gain in employment even if only temporary. This in turn means that there will be some secondary employment created. Then since the jobs created are all by definition 'worthwhile' there are also presumably benefits to the community at large. On grounds of equity it is clearly desirable that temporary jobs largely financed by the Government should be 'targeted' towards those with the least chance of getting jobs otherwise. (However, unless it **really** leads to permanent work, a full-time job that lasts only six months can leave a person worse off than before. This point is discussed more fully by Keith Windschuttle (84/C: 121.)

Whether these benefits could be obtained more cheaply or efficiently through some other kind of scheme is a separate question. The structure of the program is complicated and is somewhat clumsy, divided as it is into State/Territory and Commonwealth elements, and then into separate components, including those devoted to road building (JOLOR) and water supplies (COWSIP). This makes it hard to analyse costs and compare them with those of other schemes.

Secondary Employment

Secondary employment opportunities can be provided by **any** government expenditure, even for example by increasing the salaries of senior public servants and politicians, but the expenditure may have other and less beneficial results (inflationary pressures being one possibility). However a scheme like the CEP is more likely than most to have generally beneficial results, since projects under the scheme are obliged to be labour intensive, which means that most of the expenditure goes on wages and salaries, and since the disadvantaged are likely to spend their extra incomes rather faster than senior public servants would.

It is, however, important that the primary expenditure should be fairly steady over time, and one fair criticism which can be made of the CEP to date is the jerkiness of its operation. The DEIR report does not show much evidence of this, as it omits the number of job placements each month (and hides even the monthly approvals in graphs showing cumulative totals). In fact it seems likely that in 1983-84 job placements were bunched together near the end of the financial year since in his statement on 6 June the Minister spoke of 'more than 2,300 projects employing in excess of 19,200 people' having already started, and since, according to the DEIR report, there had been an estimated 28,400 placements by the end of June. This means that a third of all placements was made in the last month or six weeks of the year. Given that Wage Pause jobs were continuing up to 30 June it is probably quite a good thing that the CEP got off to such a slow start, but there is no evidence that this was deliberate.

In any case there is a considerable hiatus at present, partly because some regions have run ahead of others in approving projects, and partly

TABLE 1

Persons Registered as Unemployed with CES

	End June 1983	End June 1984	Known CES Placements	
			WPP to Jan 1984	CEP to June 1984
All Persons	801,849 (100%)	791,753 (100%)	13,165 (100%)	27,577 (100%)
Those registered:				
Less than 3 months	294,309 (36.7%)	276,907 (35.0%)	n.a.	n.a.
3 and less than nine months	305,897 (38.1%)	291,999 (36.9%)	n.a.	13,078 (47.4%)
9 months or more[d]	201,643 (25.1%)	222,847 (28.1%) uncertain	9,347[e] (71.0%)	13,807 (50.1%) 692 (2.5%)
Special Target Groups				
Aborigines	20,999 (2.6%)	20,800 (2.6%)	678 (5.2%)	2,344[e] (8.5%)
Disabled	54,384 (6.8%)	60,801 (7.7%)	715 (5.4%)	2,592[e] (9.4%)
Migrants with language difficulty	n.a.	n.a.	83 (0.6%)	965 (3.5%)
Females	224,373 (28.0%)	239,035 (29.8%)	4,103 (31.2%)	8,973 (32.5%)

Sources: BLMR: Interim Report on WPP, Tables 23 and 32
DEIR: CEP the first year, Tables 3.5 and 3.8
CES Statistics, June 1983 and June 1984

Notes: n.a. not available

d. WPP definition was '8 months or longer'; CEP '9 months or more'

e. Means estimated from percentages. Categories may overlap, e.g. a disabled female Aborigine can appear 3 times.

because the new guidelines announced by the Minister on 5 June have still not been published. (It is much to be hoped that future reports on the CEP will include the number of placements each month, as in the BLMR's interim report on the WPP. It ought also to be possible to use the Commonwealth Employment Service's new computerised system to monitor how many jobs will last up to what month, and this would be a considerable help in ensuring that the scheme operates smoothly over time.)

Community Benefits

There is a real contradiction between the original idea of providing work which would benefit the community and the present doctrine that although jobs must be worth doing no-one should expect them to be permanent. The Hawke Government is far too pragmatic to have much time for Galbraith and his ideas, but it is surely a little odd for them to say 'this job is worth doing, and that is why we chose to fund the project' and then to announce 'that was the job that was'. Even if the Government want to keep rigorously to the doctrine that no participant can be subsidised for more than twelve months,they could still decide that certain jobs are worth maintaining on a permanent basis, and that the more deserving amongst the unemployed can take it in turns to do the work for six to twelve months. As it is, one can only be grateful that CEP funds are being spent neither on work which is positively harmful nor on soul-destroying tasks like digging holes and filling them in again.

Targeting

The DEIR report covers only 27,577 records of job placements under the CEP, although they estimate that 28,400 placements had been made, and although 52,324 jobs had been approved during the year. They analyse these 27,577 records very thoroughly, and different tables show in great detail the relative proportions of placements going to specially targeted groups, the regional distributions both of the disadvantaged and of placements, the skills required by different people and so on. Unfortunately, however, they tend to give percentages rather than numbers; this seems a pity since although comparing percentages may give a more accurate idea of targeting success, it is still important to know, for example, how many disabled were registered with the Commonwealth Employment Service (CES) at the beginning of the year, and how many obtained jobs under the Program. Table 1 giving this information, has been compiled from CES statistics and from the DEIR report itself, and also includes placements under the WPP.

It is too soon to judge the accuracy of the CEP's targeting, but the Table shows that so far the Program has done quite well in favouring the long-term unemployed and Aborigines; it has done rather less well with the disabled, but still better than the WPP did. Migrants with inadequate English also seem to have received much more help than under the earlier scheme, but there are some problems of definition, and in any case CES records do not show how many unemployed registrants come into the category. Females are not doing much better than they did under WPP, and still make up only 32.5 per cent of total placements instead of the 50 per cent targeted. The DEIR report acknowledges this, and says it is in part explained by the large road building component of the Program.

However, what is most disheartening about the Table is that it shows that the numbers registered with the CES fell only by about 10,000 during the year, and that the proportion of those unemployed for nine months or

more actually rose, as did the proportions of Aborigines, disabled and females. Presumably one reason for this unexpectedly dark picture is precisely that more people, especially women, have been registering with CES in order to qualify for WPP or CEP jobs. However, this makes the rise in the proportion of long-term unemployed even harder to explain, and one can only hope it is mostly due to simple failures to notify the CES when jobs are found.

Scope, Cost, Efficiency

The original Program was meant to use $300m. in the first (financial) year and to provide 'up to' 70,000 jobs in a full year. According to the DEIR report 8,674 projects were approved during the first year; their total value was $728.8m, CEP funds committed were $564.3m., and 52,324 jobs were to be created. According to the budget paper put out by the DEIR, 'in 1983-84, $285.4m. was expended ... 52,300 jobs were approved or recommended for approval, of which an estimated 28,400 commenced in 1983-84, and the balance of some 24,000 are expected to commence in 1984-1985 ... In 1984-85 an amount of $410m. is to be appropriated for expenditure on CEP. This represents a 44 per cent increase and represents maintenance in real terms of total Government expenditure on job creation ...In 1984-85, some 65,000 persons will be employed under CEP. This includes 42,000 persons who will commence employment in 1984-85 and an estimated 23,000 persons already in employment at 1 July 1984'.

The DEIR report on the first year of CEP does not give any of this budgetary information but it goes into a great deal of detail about the cost in different areas and under different components of the program. The average cost of a job was $13,929, but of this $3,144 was met by sponsors and only $10,785 by the Commonwealth. Since the duration of jobs under CEP can vary from 3 months to a year, the report also gives a derived figure for the cost of a 6-month equivalent job in all locations and all program components. The average total cost was found to be $13,083, with sponsor contribution 25 per cent and cost to the Commonwealth $9,791. The DEIR point out that costs in fact vary a great deal from one State to another and from one type of project to another.

The BLMR found that WPP jobs cost on average $11,380, with the cost to the Commonwealth $9,021. They also calculated an average cost per job per week, and this came to $461 in total, with the labour component being $294 and the cost to the Commonwealth $371. The BLMR also pointed out the very wide spread in job costs according to type of job.

The DEIR do not seem to have addressed the question of why average costs varied so much between the two schemes, but no doubt it would depend on many factors and is in any case not very dramatic (in fact, although the total cost of a CEP job is higher, the Commonwealth component of one is lower).

Another question that is not asked is whether costs would be reduced if projects continued long enough to employ a succession of participants. This is anyway presumably the case with jobs in government departments or agencies, but where community groups are setting up projects it is clearly not very economic for the projects to last only for one set of jobs.

The CEP is supposed to give priority to projects with 'potential for providing participants with continuing employment after CEP funding ceases' but the DEIR report does not mention whether any of the projects

so far approved had in fact shown such potential. Nor are we told whether there were any cases where Commonwealth funding might, exceptionally of course, be continued for more than twelve months or to subsidise a series of participants. As pointed out above, where a project is of real community benefit there is already some reason to encourage its continuance beyond the original job duration. If there might also be economic benefits then it seems the decision against permanent job creation ought to be reconsidered.

Conclusion

As the BLMR have already pointed out, a scheme like the CEP is born with conflicting aims, and those administering it have to choose some kind of compromise position (see especially pp.151-152 of their interim report on the WPP). Those administering the CEP seem to be deciding to concentrate almost entirely on spreading job experiences over as many of the disadvantaged as possible. Perhaps other programs are therefore needed to take over the other aims now neglected by the CEP, permanent job creation and continuing community benefits.

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THE COMMUNITY EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM: VALUABLE EXPERIENCE FOR FUTURE PLANNING

*by Annie Kavanagh**

The Wage Pause Program and CEP have had a considerable impact on employment in the community/welfare sector. Conflicting needs and aims have lead to confusion in the implementation of the program. The program hwoever, remains lively and fascinating, largely because it involves community based planning and development; and of course anything lively and fascinating throws up problems. This paper considers those problems from a community point of view and briefly explores a range of possible solutions.

Some Problems of the Community Employment Program

For some years, through Jobless Action, we have been involved in supporting job creation projects. Like so many other welfare and community groups, we suffered under the constant irony of dealing with the multiple problems of unemployment while being chronically understaffed. The coming of the Wage Pause Program, followed by the Community Employment Program (CEP) was seen by many groups in the community and welfare sectors as a chance to pursue initiatives, plans and programs that these groups had been unable to initiate before. In other words Wage Pause and CEP were seen as funding programs: opportunities to fund social innovation, social experimentation and community caring. Community groups

writing and lobbying involved in getting a project up.

CEP is structured like a funding program, requiring the same sort of process, a similar sort of homework and similar submissions. The guidelines are sufficiently broad to attract a wide variety of projects and one of the overall aims of the program, providing community benefit, further allies the program to traditional funding programs. So both Wage Pause and CEP were inundated with large numbers of projects from groups which were seeking funding. These projects ranged from forming theatre troupes to providing specialised domiciliary care; from growing trees to setting up legal rights centres.

Now while the vast majority of these projects had considerable merit - indeed many were exciting social experiments - there was a problem that took a while to become apparent. CEP was not a funding program. It was a program set up to tackle the problems of long-term unemployed people - a program designed to create short-term jobs, work experience and training.

Community groups are used to being understaffed. The staff that do work for such groups are used to working long hours, used to a high level of self-reliance and used to working with others who have a similar dedication and commitment to their ideals. Largely they have high expectations of their staff; limited time and resources for staff induction and training and limited experience as employers of unskilled or semi-skilled labour. The projects that such groups developed reflected

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their traditional staffing situations. They expected workers to have a high degree of self-reliance, self-motivation and initiative. They often expected other specialised or sophisticated skills.

While the CEP was in its early stages, it was possible to find people who had been out of work for some time to fit the requirements of these proposals. However, it was not long before the Commonwealth Employment Service found difficulty in locating researchers, welfare workers, administrators and community artists. The Commonwealth Employment Service (CES) had problems with employers rejecting applicants because they were unsuitable. The long-term unemployed, for whom the Program was designed, were not fitting the requirements of the projects.

The administrators of the Program had to re-emphasise the original aims and guidelines. But by and large this was a process of rejecting unsuitable projects rather than by an active campaign to encourage appropriate projects. The Program has now set specific targets for each State to fulfil in terms of types of disadvantaged job seekers placed - targets for the nine-month plus unemployed, for women, for Aborigines and for migrants. However, the project development format remains much the same, relying on the funding program model. For community groups, the re-orientation in thinking about the purposes of the Program must occur by some sort of osmosis. Until the project development process changes dramatically, the problems will still occur, at considerable cost in wasted staff time both in the community groups and in the relevant departments.

Some Suggested Solutions

The Program should probably undergo an image change to work more effectively. If it remains a labour force program targeted at long term unemployed, it must be more modest in its claims and it must publicise this restricted function. At present, the Program is seen as an answer to too many varied, and often conflicting, needs. These needs should be untangled and examined in the light of the Program's experience to date. There are valuable lessons to be learnt that have implications for all future labour force programs.

Needs of Long Term Unemployed

In the absence of the capacity (or will) to create sufficient long-term jobs for all, a system that professes a commitment to equity must make special provision for the long-term unemployed who want a job. I make a distinction between those who want a job and those who have means, other than traditional work, of finding fulfilment. In our experience these people are involved in things like music, art and craft, and in the back-to-the-land movement. Others are involved in trying to establish a business of some sort. For these people we would suggest exploring the provision of some enterprise or skills acquisition allowance, unemployment benefit being an inappropriate form of maintenance for their lifestyle.

The majority of long term unemployed people, however, do want a regular job. A labour force program targeted at this group of the workforce should examine the problems that people in this group face and try to redress those problems. The generalised profile of people who have been long-term unemployed shows that most are unskilled and lack significant work experience. Predicated on the assumption that the economy is picking up and that acquiring skills will mean gaining a job,

CEP is currently aiming to provide worthwhile work experience and some form of training. The Program, however, starts at the wrong end. It has a lot to learn from marketing theory and practice in terms of understanding what 'targeting' means in practical terms.

If a Program is targeted at a special group, such as long-term unemployed people, it must know its target group well. It must examine, regularly, a reasonably detailed profile of this group and these details should include the wishes and aspirations of the people involved, as well as more concrete data. This means more interviewing, more research and more analysis by the CES (and this, of course, means more staff). It probably also means that 'long-term' has to be redefined; for practical reasons, it might become more appropriate to concentrate on those who have been unemployed for eighteen months or more.

When the CES have compiled a comprehensive profile of the target groups, they should then approach community groups with requests like 'Could you employ people who want experience in typing, in office work, in gardening, etc.'. The community groups should then be asked to submit a supervision and training plan and it is this that should be judged in determining which projects will be financed. Supervision costs money and this should be recognised; the current financial arrangements of the Program discriminate against projects which seek financial recompense for supervision. This should be changed and general guidelines or formulas worked out that acknowledge the importance and the cost of genuine supervision. In starting with the needs of the target group, the Program then has some chance of fulfilling its aims.

Needs of Community Groups

One of the fascinating things about CEP has been the incredible variety of projects that have been presented for consideration. It is obvious that there are a lot of unmet community needs, that there are any number of interesting and exciting community projects that could be undertaken providing suitable funding was available. So we have learnt, from the CEP experience, that the community sector is capable of creating significant and varied employment. The fact that a lot of the jobs that can be created in this sector are not generally appropriate for unskilled people is not a very relevant consideration in the overall aim to boost employment and ensure equity.

If, for example, Jan has a Welfare Certificate and is miserable working as a pay clerk, and then if she gets a job as a welfare worker under some new community funding program, then Paul can get a promotion from his filing clerk's position; John can be promoted from mail clerk to filing clerk and a school-leaver or other unskilled person can fill the junior position that has been left vacant by Jan's getting her community job. 'Additionality' ultimately means employing more unskilled people and capitalising on the investment society has made in education. The costs of creating skilled jobs are deemed too high. However these costs should be measured against the costs of less skilled jobs plus the greater supervision and training costs which are often involved in these jobs.

Needs of Youth

Young people have been particularly disadvantaged by the high rates of unemployment. The problems young people face with employment are underlined by their lack of life experience generally. The transition

from school to work or unemployment still remains traumatic. Jobs for young and unskilled people are notoriously alienating and boring. Employers complain that young people lack motivation, application, discipline or initiative.

Young people need challenge; they need broad and general experience; they desire variety and the chance to meet and work with lots of other people. A group of people at Jobless Action Woden (A.C.T.) held a series of afternoon sessions to develop an 'ideal' youth employment-cum-training program that would satisfy youth, fill a community need and also provide employment. The plan we devised, which was enthusiastically and unanimously endorsed, was the result of several sessions work involving, in all, about forty unemployed people. It was discussed amongst many more.

A Youth Employment/Training Program

The scheme was not unlike the Californian Conservation Corps in that it aimed to use unemployed people on environmental reconstruction projects. It aimed to provide challenge and adventure while also providing a chance to travel and see different parts of Australia. It aimed to complete worthwhile projects that urgently needed doing and that were not being done.

It was structured on a small group basis. Each group was to be of no more than ten people and each was to have a support person employed. An initial orientation period of approximately one month was envisaged. During this time the groups would learn basic group work and co-operative skills, basic survival and bushcraft skills, first aid and they would also become familiar with the various projects of the scheme: their aims and philosophy. Groups would then be assigned to or choose a project. Projects suggested were clearing up rivers, re-afforestation, soil conservation, feral animal eradication and similar rural-based environmental projects. Each project would have several groups working on it. The scheme would of course be residential; tents or other cheap community accommodation would be provided. Each group would be expected to take its weekly turn in providing meals and doing basic campsite-keeping. This would be an important part of the multiskilling process. Each group would stay with a project for three months and then (perhaps after a break) move to a different project with a different set of groups. Groups and projects will also be part of multiskilling education. Projects should have a management committee of elected representatives from groups. Such committees should address all non-technical issues, including issues such as discipline.

Award wages would have to be paid. The rural worker is not highly remunerated. Benefits, however, such as free accommodation and food would increase the wage. The idea proposed for payment involved a well organised payroll deduction scheme, whereby half the wages earned would be put into interest-bearing accounts. This money would then be paid in a lump sum at the end of the year (or two years). This lump sum of money would be thoroughly discussed during the program; advice would be available on various ways of disposing of the income (shares, bonds, fast cars, business ventures, co-operative land owning, work co-operatives, etc.). Such sessions would be extremely valuable - there would be a high level of involvement because the 'lump sum' would be a reality.

The 'lump sum' would also act as an in-built transition measure. It

would overcome many of the problems faced by people leaving employment or training with no clear goal. The regular discussions on different ways of using this lump sum would be very practical, and oriented towards setting goals on leaving the program.

Conclusion

The CEP has provided a wealth of experience from which we can learn much about labour force programs. The task now should be to start to gather the experiences and lessons and to start now to plan the labour-force programs that will replace CEP. The report of the Kirby Enquiry will obviously have bearing on future labour force program planning, however the Enquiry has been held at a stage where analysis of CEP has been in its formative stages. The implementation of the recommendations of the Enquiry should be influenced by the updated, collective experiences of those involved with the CEP.

And we must not forget about full employment. According to the Kirby Enquiry members, the Government maintains a commitment to full employment. This commitment, if it is to be a real thing, must be backed by resources, and some of those resources should be directed to developmental work. Although political reality dictates instant programs with instant results, the political climate now is probably such that we can afford to indulge in a bit of rationality for once. We can afford to learn from our experiences and plans.

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REVIEW PAPER NO. 14

PARTICIPATION AND EQUITY

. Demography, Participation and Finance: Some Aspects of the Commonwealth's Guidelines

by Gerald Burke

. The Participation and Equity Program: One Year On

by David Pettit

November 1984

DEMOGRAPHY, PARTICIPATION AND FINANCE: SOME ASPECTS OF THE COMMONWEALTH'S GUIDELINES*

*by Gerald Burke***

The federal government has stressed the importance of national priorities in recent statements on education. The main priorities are

i) greater opportunity for disadvantaged groups, and

ii) meeting the needs of the economy in a period of technological and structural change.

Greater opportunities for the disadvantaged are to be promoted mainly by encouraging them to stay longer at school. More appropriate curricula and institutions will be important in making this increased participation a worthwhile experience. It is hoped that the effect of longer schooling will be a reduction in unemployment. Not only will youth be kept out of the full-time labour market while at school but, it is implied, their prolonged schooling will enhance their later employability. The needs of the economy are seen to be served by the expansion of participation in education, in post-secondary education in courses related to science, technologies and management and also by higher education directly contributing to the revitalisation of industry, through research and collaboration with the private sector.

In this paper it is argued that government policy statements on participation are not being backed by sufficient provision of places and funds. It is also argued that some of the statements on education policy suggest a narrowing of the objectives of education and an over-simplified view of the way education can contribute to employment growth. However, these criticisms must be seen in context. It is recognised that federal real expenditure on education is being increased despite a very difficult budgetary position. And it is also recognised that the Participation and Equity Program which began in 1984 has broader objectives than the Transition Program which initially at least placed unrealistic emphasis on improving employability.

* This article is based on papers given at the National Conference on Participation, Equity and Research Policy: Planning Future Directions for Australian Tertiary Education, University of Melbourne, August 1984 and at the US-Australian Joint Seminar on the Future Impact of Technological Change on Work and Education, Monash University, September, 1984.

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PROVISION OF PLACES

The number of students at school level is determined largely by their demand for places but also by a range of barriers to participation - such as academic attainment or availability of appropriate courses in accessible distance in congenial institutions. Student demand can be affected by a range of matters including their perceptions of the future and present job markets and financial support while studying.

At post-secondary level the supply of places becomes an important factor.

Australian primary school enrolments have been declining since the late seventies and will continue to fall until about 1987. The total fall, from 1979 to 1987, is projected at about 10 per cent. After 1987, the effects of the upturn in births from 1979 will begin to be felt. Secondary enrolments are undergoing a temporary upsurge for two reasons. Firstly, the high level of births in the years 1969-71 are still affecting enrolments. Secondly, retention of pupils to Years 11 and 12 has risen very sharply in 1983 and 1984. The retention rate of students to the end of secondary school had been rising for girls and falling for boys in the late seventies. The average had remained roughly constant at 35-36 per cent from the early seventies. In 1983 it jumped to 41 per cent and could be as high as 45 per cent in 1984.

This increase is in accord with government policy, but it is occurring much faster than expected, and for reasons largely unrelated to any policy being implemented - with the possible exception of the increased level of the means tested allowances under SAS for students in Years 11 and 12 of secondary school. The large increase in school retention in 1983 occurred before the Labor Government was elected, and it seems improbable that its Participation and Equity Program has had any noticeable impact in 1984. The most important factor seems to have been the drastic downturn in the economy and its particular effect on apprenticeships in 1983.

Even if retention rates continue to rise it is unlikely that they will fully offset the effects of the fall in births that occurred from 1972 to 1979 and is still affecting primary enrolments: hence total secondary enrolments could fall somewhat in the years from 1986 to 1993 but much less than the 11 per cent projected this year on the basis of constant grade progression ratios (see DEVA, 1984). Net immigration can also have an impact but though it ran at high levels in the early eighties it has recently fallen quite sharply.

In post-secondary education (Higher Education and TAFE) the growth rate appears likely to be constrained by provision of places, not by the demand by students. In the late seventies it became easier to enter higher education: demand for places by school leavers fell away for a variety of reasons (see Learning and Earning, 1982). But as early as 1982, before the jump in Year 12 school enrolments, there were signs of revived demand for higher education. In 1983 and 1984 there has been a marked growth in demand so that an increasing number of students formally qualified for higher education are now unable to secure a place (though some places in some courses in some institutions do remain unfilled just as some vacancies exist in a time of high unemployment). This growing shortage of places is discussed by CTEC (1984, Vol.1, Part 1, p.17 and Part 2, Appendix 2).

TABLE 1

School Leavers' Demand for Higher Education:
Some Indicators, Australia 000s

Year	Population Aged 17	School Enrolments				Commencing Higher Education Following Year	
		Year 11		Year 12		Direct from School	Total
1973	232	109		77		42	82
1975	246	125		82		42	91
1977	253	135		88		40	102
1979	264	137		90		38	107
1981	261	136		88		37	106
1982	255	140		90		38	109
1983	252	156		99		(41)	113
Projected		A	B	A	B		
1984	253	162	-	111	-	42	114
1985	257	170	-	114	-		
1986	271	173	186	117	131		
1987	272	182	196	121	134		
1988	292	180	194	126	140		
1989	288	171	184	125	139		

Sources: ABS, Schools Australia, Cat. No.4202.0
National Schools Collection Government Schools Australia, Cat. No.4215.0
Non-Government Schools Australia, Cat. No.4216.0
Projections of the Population of Australia 198[illegible] to 2021, (Series A).

CTEC Learning and Earning, AGPS, 1982
Reports for 1985-87 Triennium, Vol.1, Part 2, AGPS, 1984.

D. BREWSTER et al, 'Enrolments, Access, Participation and Retention: Tertiary Education's Trendy Statistics', Youth Studies Bulletin, Vol.3, No. 1, 1984.

Notes: Projection A for Year 11 enrolments is based on retention remaining at estimated 1984 level of 0.65. Projection B assumed retention rate of 0.7. Projection A for Year 12 assumed retention rate at estimated 1984 level of 0.45. Projection B assumed a rate of 0.5. Number in brackets is estimate only.

The provision made for 1985 by the Federal Government as outlined in its Guidelines (July 1984) provides for an increase in students commencing higher education of 1300 (a little over 1 per cent). For planning purposes the numbers commencing in 1986 and 1987 can be considered to remain at 1985 level (as a minimum): it seems likely some further increases will be allowed. But as shown in Table 1 numbers in Year 12 at secondary school are growing much more rapidly - perhaps by 10,000 in 1984. It is clear that a declining proportion of those reaching Year 12 will be able to enter higher education. Indeed, the increase in intakes into higher education is only fractionally greater than that necessary to sustain the proportion of the age group in higher education, given the increasing numbers in the late teenage years projected for the rest of the eighties. CTEC has estimated that an increase of about 2 per cent per annum in students commencing higher education would restore the proportion of the 17-24 age groups in higher education to the level it attained about 1975 before the (temporary) turning away from higher education occurred.

It may be worth a moment to reconcile the impression given by Table 1 with the reported growth of thirty thousand extra places in post-secondary education to be achieved by 1987. Fifteen thousand of the places were to be in TAFE which is primarily funded by States. This provision depends largely on State decisions. The remaining fifteen thousand places are in higher education. Of these fifteen thousand, eleven thousand are the result of increases in entrants in 1983 and 1984 - what is called a pipe-line effect. Only a 1300 increase in intake is to be funded in 1985, and maintaining intakes at the 1985 level will generate about 4000 extra enrolments by 1987. To emphasise the point, the Guidelines provide for a single increase of 1300 in intake for 1985. Demographic change alone requires an increase of 1100 per annum. The Guidelines provide therefore for an almost negligible increase in access to higher education, particularly so when contrasted with the likely growth in demand.

A greater proportion of young people could be accommodated in higher education if they increased their share of commencing students. Table 1 shows that school leavers declined from over 50 per cent to well under 40 per cent of persons commencing higher education in the last ten years. This reflects in large part the substantial increase in older entrants to higher education, particularly women taking part-time courses. The Guidelines (1984) support the provision of childcare on campuses to improve the opportunities for supporting parents. But they also explicitly require that priority in access to places in higher education be given to youth. If the Government were also to re-introduce fees for higher education - a policy suggested for investigation by CTEC (1984, Vol.1, Part 1) and by Karmel (1984) - they might well do so selectively as proposed by the Fraser Government but rejected by Labor and the Democrats in the Senate. That is, they may introduce fees for second degrees. The effect on revenue would probably be trivial. But it could reduce graduate coursework enrolments - particularly in education - and research degrees enrolments. The advisability of such an effect on other grounds, including the need for extended research efforts and for further education of teachers does not seem high. Nor does it seem compatible with the development of recurrent education (see McKenzie, 1983). The case for recurrent education is made stronger if we accept that technological change requires repeated access to higher education. If it also leads to reduced working hours, early retirement, increased part-time work then the numbers seeking recurring periods of education could increase for reasons additional to the obtaining of work.

One way for the government to answer its critics is to agree that the extra students should be accommodated - but in TAFE, not higher education. This indeed, is supported by Ashenden and Costello (1984) who argue for the relative expansion of TAFE on equity and efficiency grounds. These issues are taken up later. Here it is noted that the Federal Government only funds a small fraction of the recurrent funds for TAFE but a large proportion of the capital expenditure. Its allocation in both areas falls short of the amounts calculated by the CTEC as necessary to support an intermediate projection of growth in TAFE enrolments 1985-87 (see Guidelines 1984, pp.16-21 and p.24; CTEC, Vol.1, Part 1, p.141-48). In particular, it does not provide sufficient support for a range of student services which seem increasingly necessary with the growth of full-time enrolments in TAFE and the desired increase in enrolment by less advantaged students.

The intermediate projections of TAFE enrolments for 1985-87 were seen by the Federal Government to involve an increase of over 15,000 in full-time enrolments. This is less than the growth in the years 1982-84. TAFE statistics do not allow easy estimates of pipe-line effects but a rough guess suggests that an increase in intakes of 4000 each year 1985 to 1987 would more than achieve the 15000 total growth. TAFE entrants to full-time courses come with a range of backgrounds, many with Year 11 of secondary schooling. The growth in Year 11 and Year 12 enrolments as presented in Table 1 suggests that the intermediate growth proposals for TAFE plus the very small increase allowed for Higher Education will prove inadequate to meet the growing demand. It is hard to see disadvantaged students receiving much special attention in these circumstances.

WHAT TYPE OF EDUCATION?

Schooling

I have argued that the Government is making inadequate provision for one of its major objectives: the expansion of educational participation of youth. The major reason for this objective for youth is the continuing appalling level of youth unemployment, still at 24 per cent for 15-19 year olds looking for full-time work in August 1984 and over 25 per cent in 1983.

The objective of increased participation can be supported on several grounds. But there is no evidence that it can have much effect on unemployment except by removing youth from the labour force and by creating jobs in the education sector. This matter has been argued at length in Australia in recent years. The belief that teenage unemployment largely arose because of the poor skills and attitudes of the teenagers seemed to be a hallmark of the Fraser Government.

> Some employers complain about the poor presentation of certain young people in the workforce; of attitudes and abilities which are not conducive to winning employment. These complaints say more about the systems through which young people pass than they do about the young people themselves.
>
> Yet recent surveys show that employers are protesting that there are jobs which cannot be filled; that the capacities of some young people entering the workforce are not adequate to meet the demands placed upon them.
>
> (Fraser, 1980)

But surprisingly similar ideas have resurfaced recently in speeches by Mr Hawke (The Age, 1984) and Senator Ryan:

> When we came to office we had one of the lowest rates of completion of secondary schooling of any OECD country. 25% of teenagers were on the dole, few of them with a sound enough basic education to go anywhere else. This situation had economic as well as educational causes. But schooling can, and now is, contributing to improving that disastrous situation. (Ryan, 1984a: p.15)

Senator Ryan's statement was made within a context of supporting increased federal funds. Her concern is to help improve the employability of the disadvantaged. But it is very important that employability for particular groups not be confused with an overall increase in employment. The overwhelming importance of the level of economic activity and of structural and technological factors have been discussed in many papers (see e.g., Sweet, 1983; Burke, 1983; Levin, 1981). To emphasise this we can note that unfilled vacancies in Australia in May 1984 were estimated by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) at 35,000. Unemployment was over 600,000. In 1973, the last year of full employment, vacancies were over 160,000 and unemployment about 100,000. To believe that the unemployed could get jobs in 1984 by improving their educational levels implies that employers, both government and private, have decided not to attempt to fill jobs or even to indicate their existence because they believe appropriate labour is not available. Yet they did notify vacancies in 1973 when it was clear that little labour was readily available! And in 1984 the **unemployed include persons with a wide range of educational qualifications.** In February 1984 out of a total of over 700,000 unemployed, there were 200,000 persons with post-school qualifications, including 33,000 with a degree or equivalent (ABS, 1984, Cat. No. 6240.0). The total number of vacancies in February was estimated at 44,000; that is, 1 job vacancy for every 17 unemployed (and only 1 for every 4.7 with post-school qualifications).

It is true that early school leavers have very much higher rates of unemployment than persons with more education. And they make up a large proportion of the long-term unemployed. It is important to improve the competitive position of the disadvantaged. But it is necessary not to confuse an improvement in **competitive position** with a **reduction in total unemployment.**

This renewed emphasis on the role of education in reducing unemployment derives perhaps from two factors. The first is the very great difficulty that governments, of all persuasions, have in reducing unemployment - yet their need to be seen to be doing something about it. Galbraith (1979: 36) has said:

> We suppose that on social questions we proceed from diagnosis to action. But if action is imperative, we make the cause fit the action.

If education can be blamed then action in the reform of education can be commenced - and no one can expect quick results.

A second factor causing exaggerated emphasis on education's role in reducing unemployment is best seen in the recent comment from the OECD in its paper on 'Education in Changing Social, Economic and Technological Conditions':

> For, despite the evidence that high youth unemployment is primarily a consequence of economic recession combined with structural changes in the labour market, there are suddenly numerous critics to proclaim that the schools are mainly to blame because they turn out under-educated young people. This sort of criticism carries more weight than its faulty reasoning merits ... because it coincides with rising public expectations of education in general, increasingly canalised into a demand for more quality and more open accountability of educational institutions to the community. (OECD, 1984: Para.17)

That the debate about quality has become intertwined with schooling and unemployment is of more than academic interest. It can affect policies for school curricula and structures. In the USA, reports such as A Nation at Risk (1983) emphasise perceived decline in educational standards as the cause of the relative decline in the US economy. In Australia the terms of reference for the Quality of Education Review Committee, announced in the Schools Commission Guidelines, seem very much directed at standards and at basics, including attention to 'means of improving awareness of the importance of the educational process in an increasingly competitive, including internationally competitive, environment'. At first glance these terms of reference seem closer to the objectives of the Transition Program which Labor abolished than the broad aims of the Participation and Equity Program it introduced.

However, recent speeches by Professor Johnson (1984) of DEYA and by Senator Ryan (1984b) have given attention to broader objectives. In particular, Senator Ryan in reviewing what she terms the 'economic/technological rationale' most obviously expressed in the Martin Report of 1964, noted in criticism that 'highly utilitarian conceptions of education were reinforced'. We will therefore have to wait to see how the Quality of Education Review Committee interprets its tasks. In addition, as the Minister notes, the Commonwealth does not run school systems. States are conducting their own reviews. In Victoria the Blackburn Report (1984) recommends broadening of the curriculum to improve the understanding of all in the functioning of society. It says:

> The competitive, individualised approach to futures implicit in present curricular practices neither improves people as citizens to engage in the direction of their society nor overcomes the isolation which makes individuals feel powerless in the face of apparently uncontrollable forces. (Blackburn Report, 1984: p.27) [1]

The difficulties in introducing curricula and credentials that lessen the emphasis on individual competitiveness and promote equality are considerable. Not the least of the difficulties arises from the growth in non-government schooling in a time of high unemployment. The decision announced in the Guidelines to maintain funds for high resource non-government schools and to increase them for low resource non-government schools may prove important in this context.

Tertiary

The Tertiary Guidelines imply a relatively greater growth in full-time TAFE places than in higher education, and indicate that growth in higher education should be concentrated 'in science, technology and management based courses and other courses that are of greatest relevance

to economic development and needs arising from structural change and the development of new technologies'.

It is difficult to find support for any particular distribution of students across **institutions** by reference to the needs of the economy, other than that uncertainty requires a broad general education and access to repeated education and training. Assertions that technological change necessarily increases employers' demands for particular levels of education appear to lack convincing evidence. Grubb (1984) suggests that the rate of growth in demand in the USA for middle level vocational skills is moderate relative to the supply. If true in Australia the **economic** case for expansion of vocational courses in TAFE may be exaggerated. This is not to deny that a case can be made on equity and cultural grounds for an expansion of TAFE (see e.g. Ashenden and Costello, 1984).

The evidence on the overall labour market for graduates of higher education suggests a tendency for supply to grow faster than demand. This is indicated particularly by falling relative earnings and growing rates of unemployment (Fisher, 1983). But this picture has to be qualified in several ways. The growth in numbers of graduates has slowed down in recent years, mainly because of the fall in full-time entrants to higher education in the late seventies. Graduates, despite the fall in their relative earnings, still earn considerably more on average than non-graduates. Female graduates generally have sustained their earnings differentials over time. Female graduates have a much higher rate of participation in the full-time labour force than female non-graduates. And unemployment rates for graduates are lower than for non-graduates (though for female graduates slightly higher than for females with other post-school qualifications). An additional confusing factor is that the decline in earnings of male graduates in the seventies may have been due in part to the wage fixing procedures in Australia which held back the salary awards to higher paid occupations relative to minimum awards.

Sweet (1984) shows that while unemployment in some professional and technical occupations grew rapidly in the seventies growth was also relatively rapid in a number of semi- or unskilled occupations. Labourers grew by 14 per cent in the decade. These findings are at variance with Karmel's (1984) statement that 'the expanding sectors of the economy are ones requiring a more highly qualified workforce'. Nor is Sweet's finding immediately reconcilable with Ford's plea for vast improvement in the skill levels of our workforce (e.g. Ford, 1982). But, Ford's argument hinges largely on developments in the workplace: changes in the nature of work, in management and industrial relations, which require additional training. Much of this training might occur on the job or in partnership with educational institutions. It would involve new forms of apprenticeship. But increases in the length and quality of education undergone by entrants to the workforce seem quite insufficient a condition for improved productivity and reduced unemployment.

Sweet's finding on educational levels is compatible with Jones (1982: 19) and Levin and Rumberger (1983) who, nevertheless, say 'the educational systems should strengthen the analytical and communicative skills of students, not because of the needs of high technology, but because such skills will help them deal with the changing political, economic, social and culture institutions they will face in their adult lives'.

While the future is uncertain about levels of education required it is also uncertain about **fields of study**. The CTEC is already taking a

more active role in analysing labour market requirements by field of study partly in response to government initiatives in relation to immigration which will involve it in closer consultation with the Department of Employment and Industrial Relations (DEIR). In its recent report, CTEC (Vol.1, Part 2) included a review of Computing Occupations and is to produce a further report shortly with DEIR. CTEC notes that the market for programmers, the largest occupational group, after spectacular growth from the mid-1970s moved closer to equilibrium during 1983. The development of higher level languages and increasing use of software packages is seen by DEIR as likely to reduce demand for applications programming. The review indicates 'there does not appear to be a case for any further significant shift of higher education resources towards specialised computer programming courses'.

CTEC and DEIR have been circumspect in this review. One hopes they are able to continue to be so. The worry is that CTEC and DEIR could come under increasing pressure to identify the growth areas while the evidence available to them does not allow such conclusions. Niland (1979) argued well that we lacked the data base and experienced analysts to do useful forecasting. Even with them the sheer variability of key factors creates uncertainty that no forecasting can overcome.[2] Past experience with such apparently simple fields such as education and medicine have indicated how hazardous an activity forecasting can be.

None of this argument about uncertainty about future job prospects should be taken to deny the need for adaptability in post-secondary education to meet developing labour force needs. It in fact suggests an even greater need for flexibility. The criteria by which we judge a system to be adaptable are a crucial element in such discussion. In Britain the increasing involvement of the Manpower Services Commission (MSC) in control of funding for further education is seen as promoting adaptability. It will be interesting to see how the MSC's activities can be evaluated. As already argued it is unlikely to make any noticeable dent in overall unemployment. A better match of workers with available jobs would be a good thing but the MSC's capacity to do it has been questioned: 'Mr David Young, the Commission's Chairman, told the TES this week that his officials could not claim to know better than the colleges what courses they should be running ... He refuses to take up the challenge to say how the MSC's regionally-based network can gauge employer's wants more finely than colleges and further education examining bodies who already have strong employer representation at local and national levels' (TES, 10 February, 1984).

Finance and Expenditure

The Federal Government has increased its outlays on education for 1985 by roughly 3.5 per centin **real terms**: outlays on schools by 2.6 per cent, on tertiary education by 2.9 per cent, and on student assistance schemes by approximately 10 per cent. These increases were made despite a tight budget. However, educational outlays **at current prices** (and including some cost supplementation to institutions for inflation in the first half of 1984) are projected to increase by 11 per cent. All Commonwealth outlays are projected to increase 13 per cent and its receipts nearly 18 per cent. Hence, education will continue to decline as a proportion of Commonwealth outlays (Budget Statements, 1984: 8). It had fallen from 9 per cent of total outlays in 1976-77 to 7.2 per cent in 1983-84. As a percentage of GDP total State and Commonwealth outlays fell

TABLE 2

Index of Projections of Recurrent Educational Expenditure and GDP

Date	Recurrent Expenditure				GDP
	Assuming Constant Real Wages		Assuming 2 per cent per annum increase in wages		
	Schools	Total	Schools	Total	
1981-82	100	100	100	100	100
1987-88	98	104	108	115	120
1992-93	99	109	120	132	148

Sources and Notes:

GDP estimates based on annual increases of 3.6 per cent per annum representing 2 per cent increase in productivity and 1.6 per cent in employment.

Recurrent expenditure estimate at constant real wages per employee from Burke (1984b). Estimate assuming 2 per cent per annum increase in wages per employee in education assumes that 85 per cent of recurrent expenditure is for wages and salaries and related costs.

For further details see Burke (1984).

from a peak of 6.4 per cent in 1977-78 to about 5.7 per cent in 1983-84, with the fall concentrated on capital expenditures and student benefits.

Projections of enrolments and expenditure were prepared early this year (Burke, 1984b). The growth in participation rates assumed for those projections is only slightly lower than the growth now occurring. Expenditure required for the resulting projected enrolments at constant real cost per student would lead to a slight fall in the proportion of GDP devoted to recurrent public expenditure on education in the period to 1988. This is shown in Table 2. There would be a more marked fall in the early nineties on a reasonable range of assumptions for growth in real GDP and in teachers and lecturers' salaries relative to the general price level. The main reason is that the projected growth in the labour force is greater than growth in enrolments.

Current government provisions are to reduce further the real expenditure per student in higher education. The increase in enrolments in 1984 was funded at roughly half the recurrent cost per student, and increases for 1985-87 are to be funded at approximately two-thirds of average cost. The Commonwealth is increasing its recurrent funds per student in primary and secondary schools and has promised to continue such annual increases to 1992. But the absolute amount is relatively small since the Commonwealth funds only a small proportion of the recurrent costs of government schools. By 1992 it expects to fund about 8 per cent of a target standard compared with about 5 per cent at present.

The conclusion is that, depending on State provision, recurrent expenditure as a percentage of the GDP could fall further than already projected. Capital expenditures are not expected to grow very significantly even though attention has been drawn to inadequate facilities by the Education Commission. Student assistance may increase. The Federal Government has been undertaking a review of income support for young people which was expected to be finished for this year's budget but will now be seen in next year's.[3]

The Commonwealth in particular is seeking to make further savings: 'We have to find ways of solving problems with the resources available to us now or at resource levels not much greater ...' (Ryan, 1984a). The Guidelines (1984: 2) to the CTEC seek a report on 'alternative means of increasing enrolments and participation in tertiary education including the wider use of new technologies and more intensive utilisation of resources available to institutions'. One way of doing this is to promote external studies. The lower costs of the Open University in Britain probably look appealing. The consequences for students, both youth and adult, need further consideration (Anwyl, 1984). On campus, institutions may well make use of new technologies in the variety of ways recently reviewed by Bowden (1984). It is important to note that an initial sizeable cost is involved in introducing new computer technology even if it opens up prospects for greater learning at a lower cost in the longer term.

Funding for research is also being constrained. The reduction in funds per student supplied to higher education implies a cut in research time available to staff and in institutional funds for research. General and Scientific Research funding has been reduced in real terms (Budget Statements, 1984: 246). The Guidelines (1984: 22) seek to encourage the

higher education sector to obtain funding for research from the private sector - as well as giving priority to activities which have potential for direct economic or social benefits (1984: 13).

The Guidelines make no mention of seeking private funding of the tuition costs of post-secondary education though the possibility has been raised by Karmel (1984) and by CTEC (1984: 24) which argues 'Re-introduction of fees, in conjunction with generous means-tested scholarship provision, could be a better alternative than denial of educational opportunity because insufficient places had been made available'.

Labor Party policy opposes the introduction of fees. Even if they were introduced, it seems their effects would be mainly on the distribution of access. It seems unlikely that they would be introduced on a scale to make a major impact on total funding. It also seems unlikely that they could have a sizeable impact on the adaptability or efficiency of institutions as is argued by proponents of free market education.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The increasing rates of participation at school now occurring together with a temporarily growing late teenage population are leading to greater demand for post-secondary education. The Federal Government is finding it difficult to fund this increased demand and is seeking ways to reduce the cost of the places it does provide. It does not appear to acknowledge a point made in its election policy in 1982 as well as by Karmel (1984) and by CTEC (1984): that perhaps half the cost of any place in higher education and associated student assistance could be offset by reduced social security payments if a compensating fall in unemployment occurs.

Many Commonwealth statements on the nature of education - levels and fields of study and type of curriculum - appear to be based on **asserted** relationships between education and employment in a period of technological change. One reason for these assertions could be that they are acceptable to the electorate and to the party as grounds for even the small funding increases it has been able to make.

Karmel (1984) argues for participation rates to rise well beyond their present levels: for example, for schools, to the levels in the ACT of 73 per cent to Year 12; for enrolments in higher education to grow by 50 per cent and for a training scheme to replace apprenticeship but with double the peak apprenticeship numbers. The costs of such increases he estimates at about 1.4 percentage points of GDP. The estimates presented here in Table 2 show that demographic changes could lead to partial offsets to these cost increases so the net increase could be less than the 1.4 percentage points which Karmel argues is not an impossible task over a decade. The difficult task is to think of ways of creating support for the funding of broadly based education which recognises the considerable uncertainties of the future and the likelihood of continuing and even growing employment problems.

FOOTNOTES

1. A major aspect of the Blackburn Report is the appropriate structure within which a reformed curriculum can be developed. The case for upper secondary colleges is argued. Some commentators, e.g. Windschuttle (1984) favour specialist post-compulsory institutions.

2. Senator Ryan (1984b: 8) has recognised the unreliability of much manpower forecasting and the lack of adequate data base.

3. There is the possibility that the upsurge in education demand currently occurring could fade away if student assistance should erode and should the financial rewards to post-secondary education prove disappointing.

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THE PARTICIPATION AND EQUITY PROGRAM: ONE YEAR ON

*by David Pettit**

In July 1983 the Commonwealth Minister for Education and Youth Affairs, Senator Susan Ryan, issued Guidelines[1] for 1984 to the Schools Commission and the Tertiary Education Commission. A major plank of the Government's educational policy is to increase participation in education and/or training and to pursue greater equity for all young people in the benefits to be achieved through education. The Participation and Equity Program was established to highlight and promote that policy. A program with such ambitious and far-reaching objectives must lead to changes. As such it is a challenge to the status quo which will inevitably result in tensions, particularly in the formative stages. PEP has done just that.

The tensions are both general and particular. PEP has stimulated widespread debate about the purposes of education both in schools and in tertiary institutions. For some it is an appropriate, timely program: for others it is seen as yet another assault by barbarians upon the citadels of learning. Debate has focused on PEP's conceptualisation, its implementation, its priorities and the nature and composition of the decision-making bodies. Tensions at the interface of the secondary and tertiary sectors, many of which have been apparent for some time, have been heightened by the expectations of greater participation and equity. Finally there has been disputation about the appropriation of the Guidelines issued by the Schools Commission and the TAFE Council.

The tensions in schools, in the tertiary arena, between the secondary and tertiary arenas and about the guidelines are the subject of this article. They became apparent during consultations between the Commonwealth PEP Co-ordinating Committee and States and Territories in the periods preceding and following the 1984 National Conference of the Program held in Canberra in early September. Reference is made to conference papers and statements and to other relevant documentary sources.

In drawing attention to the tensions that appear inevitable in the early stages of a major program, there is implicit an assumption that manageable conflict is the wellspring of productive change. Tensions indicate change areas and change issues. As such they have to be placed in the context of the unanimously endorsed final statement of the conference that congratulated the Government on its PEP initiative.

The Nature of the Program: Coercion vs Exhortation

PEP is a federal intervention program. Its strategy is to use funds to stimulate changes in Australian education for which the federal Government holds assumed, rather than constitutional, responsibility. The Minister has indicated that the Commonwealth should use its funds for 'innovative change and equality improvements'[2] in schools rather than as a base provider. The Prime Minister's emphasis has been upon 'the quality and outcomes of education'.[3] But, in all sorts of ways, the distance between Canberra and the classroom is substantial. Bringing about change in educational institutions is not straightforward.

Both Commonwealth Education Commissions - Schools and Tertiary - interpret the Minister's policy directions through guidelines. Those guidelines are reinterpreted at the State level and again by schools and TAFE colleges, perhaps after regional intervention. The Commonwealth

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policy is to attempt to maintain steerage and co-ordination by establishing State committees of a broadly representative nature that include Commonwealth organisations - the Department of Education and Youth Affairs, the Schools Commission and the Department of Employment and Industrial Relations. Both TAFE and schools are represented. These committees flesh out the Commonwealth guidelines in the State context but their decisions remain subject to Commonwealth approval. The professional officers of PEP in both TAFE and schools - government and non-government - also have a role in fleshing out the broad State policies. Their conceptualisation, like that of the Committees, draws in most cases on previous experience, largely in Transition Education and other special purpose programs and, where appropriate, on recent State reviews of education.

The States' interpretations of PEP already vary considerably; ranging from a program implementation to an action research orientation. For example, in one State the traditional, submission-based approach to funding school and college proposals in accordance with centrally defined and legitimated issues has been maintained. In another funds are distributed to schools on an entitlement basis for staff development providing proposals meet the approval of local peer groups operating within State guidelines. As has been shown in other reports,[4] there are already indications that the degree of compliance with guidelines is determined largely by the school or college's prior disposition to the concepts, although some modification and at least superficial compliance may occur in order to gain access to resources. Thus, the tensions between a centrally imposed model of educational change, which is difficult and expensive to police in a federal system, and the need for individual and group commitment at the institutional level for effective change is already present in PEP.

The National Context of the Program

The Commonwealth Government is primarily concerned with economic management, economic growth and the state of the labour market. The economy is tied to education and to PEP through the presumed relationship between education and productivity, the declining opportunities for the 15-19 year old age group in full-time employment, the changing patterns of the labour market and the prospect of further labour market change as a result of national and international technological change.[5] The Prime Minister[6] has emphasised the need for 'a co-ordinated education and training system which will meet the employment opportunities and challenge associated with economic growth and technical change'.

The strong and close links that the Government draws between the economy, the labour market and education clearly imply a purpose for education and a role in national policy that have caused tension in both the tertiary and secondary sectors of the education industry. In TAFE with its close relationships with the Industrial Training Commission, the Commonwealth Employment Service and the Department of Employment and Industrial Relations and, to a lesser extent, for Advanced Education, the nexus is more natural. For those schools and universities closely linked by what the Prime Minister has called 'traditional pre-university subjects',[7] the blunt intrusion of economic and employment criteria into what is claimed to be a liberal education tradition can be anathema: for others too.

The relationship between education and the economy is emphasised in

both the 1983 Guidelines and the 1984 Funding Guidelines to the Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission (CTEC) for the triennium 1985-87. [8] In the former the Minister emphasised the need to 'address the inter-related aims of economic recovery and the wellbeing of all young people' within the Government's educational policy that includes, inter alia, helping to shape economic recovery and development. In the latter, higher education is called upon to improve the output of 'skills related to employment opportunities including those needed to underpin technological progress'. Special reference is made to the disciplines of science, technology and management and to the tertiary sector's role in 'economic development, technological innovation and industry restructuring'. The OECD draft Report[9] on Youth Policies has also commented on the issue, criticising the poor connection between vocational training policies and the labour market as well as the destructive effect on some young people of the low school retention rates.

The Government's position is that schools and TAFE will improve participation if there is greater relevance of curriculum and improved structures. Earlier the Minister had stated that 'traditional curricula need to become more immediately relevant and more immediately applicable to what the students and their parents see as being their requirements for useful and fulfilling lives beyond school, be they in tertiary education or employment'. [10] Part of the relevance would be understanding the economic and employment system.

The close relationship that the Government is promoting between the economy, the labour market and education is emphasised strongly here because it is within those parameters that education policy and PEP is located and within them that policy decisions about future expansion or contractions of federal support for education will be made. The relationship being promoted is for some an acute point of tension about what priorities in education should be.

PART TWO: TENSIONS AT THE CHALKFACE

Introduction

Education needs to assume broader purposes if those staying on, those to be enticed to schools and tertiary education and those for whom increased provision will be made at tertiary level are to be fully included and have experiences they value. That view is not unique to the Commonwealth. Victoria, according to the Blackburn Report, [11] 'is at a turning point in providing for those who have reached the end of compulsory schooling'. The Steinle Report[12] states that 'there is a crisis in purpose in high schools throughout Australia'. In Western Australia the Beazley Committee has recommended significant changes in schooling and in its relationship with TAFE. [13] The Advanced Education Council's response to the CTEC Guidelines 1985-87 indicated the need for broader, different and additional purposes for higher education.[14]

Once they are beyond compulsory years students can be enticed to stay at school and go on or return to tertiary education by the relevance and value they perceive exists in courses. An alternative is to drive them to do so by policies that involve putting educational riders on the provision of income support, much in the way that the Transition Allowance does. The contention inherent in the former, desirable policy is that it

involves a challenge to the pre-eminence of what has been described as the competitive, academic curriculum. From that much follows.

Schools

Greater participation, particularly if it is to be by those from Aboriginal and low income backgrounds who have not traditionally stayed at school, clearly implies change to the curriculum, assessment procedures and organisation of pre- as well as post-compulsory schooling. That change involves tension because for most schools it implies a challenge to the stable, taken-for-granted assumptions under which many schools operate and which are often vociferously supported by articulate parents of successful students. Issues of equity that arise are not the prerogative of one of the community sub-sets of the school, but of all.

The view of the Minister is that equity is more productively engaged by seeking equality of opportunity at the end rather than at the beginning of schooling.[15] An emphasis is placed upon the need for all students to experience quality schooling[16] and for excellence and quality to be pursued together. In fact much of the equity component of the debate is being pursued under the banner of quality for all. PEP is interpreted by Hannan[17] as a school improvement program in which curriculum is developed or adapted where this is considered desirable by students and teachers alike, has demonstrated relevance, reduces failure and has a range of teaching approaches suitable to individual differences. Interpretations of these idealised positions vary. Some schools at the Conference described their experiences of negotiated curriculum and of consultations that involved students, teachers and some parents about particular courses. Others simply discard courses that students reject. Other schools' interpretations are more content-centred emphasising the development of essential learning areas which generally incorporate five or six major areas of the curriculum that includes compulsory and voluntary units. In general terms, this approximates to a view of a common curriculum[18] which all students should experience, (although as Hannan pointed out the concept of a common curriculum is based more on principles than content) and emphasises the need for knowledge to be widely perceived as valued, to be translatable into practice and to incorporate skills necessary for cultural formation.

The concepts of equity, of equality of outcomes and of common curriculum have been strongly challenged by those for whom they imply uniformity and levelling down. The conference position[20] was that equality of outcomes is not the same as identical outcomes; it does not mean retarding students but rather developing students' talents to their fullest potential in a wide range of life experiences. There is clearly room for further elaboration and clarification as Tickell[21] observed in his review of individual differences as an approach to equity.

The issue of relevant curriculum raised by both the Prime Minister and the Minister was debated in terms of general (traditional) and vocational education and also in terms of degree of specificity of the vocational element in education. Strong opinions were expressed that job specific skill training is not desirable: generic occupational skill training is. Hannan[22] drew attention to the difficulty of equating practical experiences with vocational courses 'where the vocations are fading into the distance'. Blackburn[23] echoed the Minister's exhortation to take seriously the vocational motivation that many young people had by espousing new forms of general education which would include education for

a working life. She advocated liberalising 'vocational' education and applying 'general' education to real-life pursuits and in this way gradually abolishing the general-vocational, mental-manual dichotomy. The role of general education is to connect intellectual effort and theory to the major issues of the contemporary world and the major issues in society including education for work. This debate is very similar to the English debate about comprehensive schoc.s of twenty years ago but is set in a crucially different context.

While advocates of whole-school change were numerous at the conference and its desirability was acknowledged, the strategy of incremental change appeared to be most commonly followed by schools. In this context, Hannan's scenario of the range of possibilities for school change that might occur as the result of developing courses alternative to the mainstream was cautionary. Practitioners from schools and TAFE described the development of new alternative courses, and their relationship to the mainstream and the stages by which they come to constitute the mainstream and hence ar crucial in promoting inclusiveness for those who have not traditionally used school and TAFE. However, the view was also expressed that alternatives can easily remain marginal to the more powerful general academic courses with which most teachers feel comfortable and for which their own education prepares them.

In summary at this stage of the Program, with schools in initial funding negotiations, there are few signs of new priorities and directions emerging from the schools. Most issues have been raised by those responsible for the Program at State or national level who are promoting general directions. Those in schools are largely guided by past experience of special purpose programs. Other issues have developed from more theoretical, philosophical positions, some of which are linked to the chalkface by extended observation. Curriculum change is central to the PEP debate. There is confusion over how equity might be interpreted and there is hostility to perceptions of implied uniformity. Major issues on the emerging agenda appear to be: negotiated curriculum for student acceptance; the ideas of a common curriculum and of essential learning areas, and the mental-manual dichotomy debate raised in a general-vocational context; clustering; within school restructuring for smaller units and assessment and school-based decision-making. All these provide an agenda of concern for schools and State committees.

TAFE

In TAFE the issues are often similar to those in schools but display differences in orientation and interpretation. A major aim of PEP in TAFE is to broaden the PEP curriculum from the original Transition Education orientation; that is, from narrow vocational preparation in low skill areas. While the need to maintain a vocational emphasis is accepted so too is the need to incorporate more general life skills, to emphasise personal competence and to increase self-concept. Linking PEP courses to mainstream opportunities in TAFE that create opportunities to be taken up immediately or later has become a major concern.[24]

TAFE PEP courses are to be focused on the most disadvantaged groups, more particularly Aborigines, women and girls, some migrant groups and socially and geographically isolated young people. Some in these groups are long-term unemployed, early school leavers and lack post-school education and training. Hudson [25] pointed out the high costs of providing the special support required to keep such young people in courses, a view

strongly supported by TAFE practitioners. The practitioners also noted the marginal, low status nature of many PEP programs in TAFE colleges, their relative smallness and the difficulty of changing teachers' and administrators' attitudes towards those with special needs for ongoing support.

The PEP issues in TAFE are substantially different from those of the TAFE mainstream. Bradley[26] noted that many PEP students are alienated from formal education, with significant periods of unemployment and are often conscripted through the Commonwealth Employment Service (CES). They attend full-time and place greater personal demands on teachers, many of whom are not fully prepared for such a task. For these reasons much of the immediate concern of TAFE is for course and curriculum development, staff development, review of credentialling and development of support and counselling services. However, there are real concerns about who makes these decisions and how. Bradley claims that:

> The TAFE sector is the major educational prop of the sex segregational labour market which confines women to an unacceptably narrow range of occupational choices and opportunities. The tripartite arrangement whereby male unionists, employers and TAFE teachers plan and develop curricula institutionalises continuation of men's control over almost all trade and technical training in this country ... In addition this arrangement excludes any rights that TAFE students might have to participate effectively in the curriculum planning process ....

Community Group Position

The elimination from formal education of many potential PEP students who have left school highlights the need for outreach programs in their own right and as bridging into TAFE PEP. In some States there are community-based programs. Some involve collaboration with colleges and schools; others are totally outside institutions. The inclusion of community groups with experience and commitment to young people with special educational needs as advisers and providers is both desirable and problematic. It is problematic for two reasons. Firstly, the quality control and accountability notion of regular institutions may be inappropriate and indeed destructive of the sort of action needed for the real benefit of the alienated. Secondly, because community groups need the advice and support of TAFE institutions for funds, resources and advice, innovation proposals are vulnerable to conforming rather than developmental approaches.

The involvement of community groups has an important symbolism for institutions: it signifies their capacity to break their boundaries in both conventional and non-conventional manners in furtherance of participation and equity.

PART THREE: TENSIONS AT THE SECTORIAL INTERFACE

Post-compulsory education has been moving from a state of being a minority concern for young people to that where both secondary and tertiary education are being required to assume broader purposes. Changed purposes require changes to curricula, institutional organisation, teacher skills and attitudes, public understanding and youth support policies. Not all the problems that change entails can be solved at school or college level or in sub-regional groupings or clusters. Policy changes are required that are of State and national dimensions.

There is tension at the sectorial interface between secondary and tertiary education in the areas of end-of-school certification, the structure of post-compulsory education, including schooling, and the nature of youth policy, in particular income support. All three require resolution in ways that enhance rather than discourage the participation of young people and remove the penalties from the disadvantaged.

Certification at Year 12 influences the size and the nature of the population achieving access to the tertiary arena and bears directly on the nature of secondary curriculum and thereby its appropriateness to a wide range of young people. Blackburn [27] has pointed out that as long as the major role of end-of-school credentialling remains selection for tertiary entry, the limits of change to curriculum and to accreditation have probably been reached. Beazley makes the same point. Hannan[28] drew a bleak picture of the changes being wrought by the Australia-wide reviews of end-of-school certification. In his view, changes to certification are marginal. New, alternative courses which are often examined in an alternative, mainly locally moderated way, are being acknowledged. But implicitly, a two-tier system of courses is being created composed of the academic courses with tertiary entrance clout and those, mainly new alternatives, without. Most of the latter are described on certificates with the former but in a different way. With the exception of Blackburn in Victoria they fail to relate school and TAFE certification.

After a decade of stable or declining demand for tertiary entry (except TAFE), increased demand over the past two years has reinforced the traditional competitive fight for and the monkey-grip of tertiary institutions, and of certain disciplines, particularly the prestigious ones, over the purposes and scope of upper secondary schooling, often in direct opposition to the goals of PEP. The best articulated response to this problem has come from the Australian Education Council. The Council states that the tension at the interface of secondary and higher education

> stems from the absence in higher education of any review of purposes which could match that being undertaken in schooling. As a result the articulation between higher and secondary education has become disjointed. [29]

Linking entry requirements and purpose, the Council stated that:

> To the extent that current entry requirements identify those likely to succeed they do so in relation to the set of purposes served by the courses ... If those purposes change or are broadened, then a change in entry requirements may well be a logical consequence ... If higher education is to cater for a larger proportion of the age cohort, then entry requirements

must correspond to the broader purposes of higher education.

> The Council believes, for example, that serious consideration should be given to the view that passage from Year 12 to the first year of higher education should be as open as the current passage from Year 10 to Year 12: that, in effect, the vast bulk of the age cohort should have the right at least to try higher education.[30]

Such changes, which are of pressing concern to PEP, will require public education. That issue is taken up by McKinnon:

> So far the Australian public has been conditioned to the view that tertiary education is for a small privileged elite. It has not taken the view that tertiary education is a national necessity for a substantial proportion of the population. Part of the myth to which the population has been conditioned is that only a few are given the talent to be able to profit from tertiary education and that extension of it to a large number would necessarily involve an unacceptable lowering of standards. Moves to expand access involve overcoming such unfounded conservative views and increasing acceptance of the view that it is nationally necessary that a higher proportion of the population can and should be given opportunities to develop their talents to tertiary levels, that education is a developmental process with potential for success for a significant proportion of the population, not merely a winnowing process to discover the few born to rule.[31]

Such a view was strongly supported at the National Conference where a need for public education on PEP issues and implications was strongly recommended.

The difficulty of reforming Year 12 certification stems from its use to control entry to prestigious disciplines in universities such as medicine, engineering and law; and also to many other forms of employment and training, irrespective of the relevance of the certificate for that purpose. The nature and relative prestige of the Year 12 subjects bestowed by the certification process distorts the secondary curriculum. In effect, the process emphasises the academic as distinct from the more practical subjects and the theory rather than application even where subjects have a strong practical potential. This concentration on the prevocational preparation of professionals excludes those whom PEP is most concerned to encourage. For many, practice is the most effective avenue to learning, be it related to preparation for work or for life in a democratic society. Bradley [32] drew attention to the pedagogic lessons that schools could draw from TAFE in this regard. Institutionally the division is enshrined in the separation of schools from TAFE. Whether the more effective solution for young people is to encourage greater collaboration between the two or look to the creation of new, more inclusive structures is a matter of perspective, priority and pragmatism.

Collaboration between schools and TAFE varies between States. In the larger States, link courses have had both prevocational and awareness-raising aims. More recent developments have tended to address issues raised in the TAFE draft guidelines. For example, the Inter-departmental Review Committee in NSW is looking to determine the nature of programs, the content and the time allocation in order to gain accreditation as approved study courses for HSC and for TAFE credit. Funding, implementation and evaluation details are also under review.

The tensions in TAFE-school collaboration are various. Conceptualisation can be different between the two sectors; industrial conditions vary; the guidelines for funding are not uniform; there are different priorities in giving access, and accreditation of a single experience for differing purposes is difficult. Experience also shows that many young people are unwilling to move between institutions unless the desire for the experience is extremely strong and the conditions are ideal.[33]

Structural change that brings schools and parts of TAFE together in community colleges was proposed in the recent Victorian review of post-compulsory schooling:

> In the longer term, nothing less than post-compulsory institutions which are entities in their own right, dissociated from but drawing on both the school and TAFE traditions, can succeed in providing the kinds of learning experiences and integration of academic, applied, vocational and experiential learning now required for a third stage of schooling having serious purpose for the whole age group and oriented towards adult participation in the society.[34]

That review raised the curricular, pedagogic, operational and developmental issues involved in the context of 'some kind of all-age comprehensive community college'.[35]

Income Support and Youth Policies

The Government has often stated that PEP is the centrepiece or cornerstone of its developing youth policy in which education, training, employment policies and income support are co-ordinated. At the National Conference the major concern was for a rational and just system of income support which enabled young people to make an effective choice between the educational options available and which also had regard to the student's personal and family circumstances. Abrahart[36] contrasted two approaches to youth policy: the first a comprehensive ideological approach based upon youth empowerment, and the second a set of co-ordinated policies to reduce youth unemployment and the associated problems. He drew attention to the limitations of PEP alone acting, as it does, in only one arena of youth policy (and not comprehensively there). He pointed out that the opportunities PEP provided could be undermined by an income support system that supported unemployment, work or education but no meaningful combinations of these. At present the different Government departments that administer income support make payment according to various sets of conditions that reflect their individual departments' values and priorities. Education authorities' payments value education, parent responsibility and work and/or study habits. The policy for payments to those in the labour market accepts independence at 16 years: thus welfare payments are a right for the very same age group which is obliged to accept education as a privilege. Abrahart concludes that the incentives 'tend not to be in favour of further education or training except in a few cases ... Eligibility criteria are complex and there are no clear signals about which activities are favoured and which are not'.

Income support is only one of a series of initiatives in the youth area which include attempts to reduce unemployment, increase general support services and of course participation in education or training. The potential cost of comprehensive income support measures for youth in education and various forms of training is huge; the difficulties of

parental income testing daunting and the machinery to implement a scheme huge and costly. In OECD terms income support is an arm of policy that steers the unemployed and unsuitable into activities with employment prospects, such as education and also enables young people to choose options without the of short-term financial factors. Conference opinion was that these conditions are not, at present, being met.

From PEPs perspective, the need is obvious for a comprehensive income support policy for youth to complement the drive in education and training for greater equity in opportunities for PEPs targetted groups. Without such a policy those from disadvantaged groups are unlikely to stay in or go back to education and the curricular and organisational initiatives in schools and colleges are likely to be superfluous.

Equity is more controversial than participation: it demands a more fundamental reappraisal and reconceptualisation of the purposes of education. Targetting is the most controversial issue in PEP because through it the Schools Commission and the TAFE Council have addressed equity. As Tannock[37] points out, PEP funds are marginal compared with those required for the day-to-day running of systems. Whether to make PEP funds available to all or some schools is crucially related to policy priorities about equity. The Commission and the Council had the option of targetting or otherwise. In deciding to target, the focus could have been on special groups: the 'girls and students from disadvantaged backgrounds' of the 1983 Guidelines; institutions - described as 'secondary schools with low retention rates';[38] educational issues raised by the Commission or the Committee, or any amalgam of these. The Commission selected schools described by socio-economic criteria; the Committee, the most disadvantaged groups and most States have also emphasised issues approached often in ways that may conflict with the federal interest.

The Schools Commission's recommendation to target about 40 per cent of schools, to be determined largely on socio-economic criteria which the States and Territories could specify, has lead to considerable inter- and intra-state variations in criteria and hence in data bases. A special sub-committee under Schools Commission aegis is investigating the issue further. As with any targetting program those schools on the margin of being targetted can be described as particularly disadvantaged. Further differences have developed as those States recently or presently engaged in reviews of schooling have sought to merge State review recommendations with PEP which is a useful source of funds for change. Predictably there has been hardship for those schools running successful Transition Education programs who have not been targetted under PEP. Differences have also occurred between States and systems over the allocation of funds between schools and systems. Many of these are the teething problems of a complex program.

All TAFE colleges are eligible for PEP funding. The change from Transition Education to PEP Guidelines has caused some dislocation. Under the previous program priority on entry to TAFE courses was given to referrals from the Commonwealth Employment Service and an income support Transition Allowance was available. This policy made unemployment a prime

criterion for targetting. However there appears to be inconsistencies in the extent to which unemployment and, in particular, length of unemployment can be correlated with the disadvantaged groups of prime concern to TAFE PEP programs. If TAFE is to concentrate in PEP on the most disadvantaged as is intended then even greater emphasis may need to be placed on non-institutional outreach programs.

There is a major question mark about the capacity of PEP to address fully the special conditions necessary for participation of the targetted groups, especially through school programs that are more broadly targetted than those in TAFE. At the National Conference the Aboriginal representatives[39] were strongly supported by those of non-English speaking backgrounds and the disabled in questioning the adequacy for the targetted groups of:

- programs aimed at the general school community
- structures developed for decision-making, such as State and local committees
- processes at present being used for determining the nature of local programs
- available funds.

In moving the PEP debate from participation to equity, from general and imprecise improvements to the specific actions required to promote equity under one umbrella, the real limitations of PEP become apparent, the difficulties inherent in paternalism clear and the need for the creation of priorities pressing. State Committees - government and non-government - are the expression of such a variety of representative and management purposes and pressures that direct representation of disadvantaged groups is not occurring and cannot occur in large scale expansion of the committee size or fundamental restructuring. (Some would argue that TAFE concerns are also assuming second rate status on some committees.)

At the local level, evidence from other programs[40] indicates the difficulty of developing effective non-teacher participation, particularly in the formative stages of programs and especially with people from targeted groups. The National Conference was pressed to make this a major priority area. In TAFE where there is apparently less experience of engaging students, the dominance of traditional administration-teacher dominated processes as described by Bradley appears largely unchallenged.

As is cited above, Hudson indicated that the cost of special provision for disadvantaged groups and individuals who have not previously participated is high. While the equity concept remains a high concern in PEP, achieving success in its implementation will require both a high degree of integration with existing special programs for effective resource use and/or allocations to particular groups within PEP. Another related issue as yet unaddressed is the representation of the needs of young people of low income who are not members of clearly defined groups such as Aborigines and the disabled.

Finally the Conference affirmed that the necessary marriage between schools and TAFE had some shot-gun characteristics. TAFE Colleges have greater autonomy than schools to enhance (or otherwise) school links and PEP programs. Their targetting is different from that of schools, the age group wider and in some cases less accessible and thus in TAFE the developing curricula agenda in part runs counter to that in many schools.

Nevertheless, there are many areas of curriculum and pedagogy where the lessons to be learnt are eminently transferable: how this transfer is to occur needs to be confronted especially at a school and college level and in practical terms.

PART FIVE: IN SUMMARY

In comparison with other Commonwealth Special Purpose programs PEP is undeniably wide ranging and ambitious. The Program is being implemented at a time when the Commonwealth Government is expressing disquiet about the quality of Australian education and in particular about the efficacy of some Commonwealth financed projects. This general concern is evident in the Quality of Education Review chaired by Professor Peter Karmel. More particularly the Commonwealth is concerned about its steerage capacity in relation to broad national policies. Yet it is hard to see the Government withdrawing from its politico-economic commitment to greater participation and increased relevance in education.

The conceptualisation of participation is less controversial than equity. Participation of necessity has to be more than retention in the post-compulsory years: indeed there is just cause for regret that the two were ever so closely associated. Profound and sincere questioning about who participates and how in education inevitably leads to questions of equity, to reconceptualisation of the purposes of education and to the need to review current practice. If such a review could leave institutions only marginally affected by change, the issue of equity would be less contentious. But when allied to the broader purposes debate, equity challenges vested well-established interest groups of teachers, parents and students in the secondary and, in particular, the tertiary arena for whom the ability to assert the pre-eminence of some forms of knowledge, skills and culture is crucial. While at present much of the PEP debate is particularist and myopic, the larger debate will, inevitably soon have to be joined.

In political quarters there is little sympathy for the valid claim that substantial educational change is not short-term. If PEP is to last the decade that Tannock believes necessary for it to achieve its ambitious goals, there will be searching evaluation and questioning along the road. For this PEP requires a more sophisticated and better developed research capability than has characterised other previous federal special purpose programs. The capacity is required for accountability and as a support for institutional evaluation. It does not now exist as a national capacity.

Deskilling of teachers is implicit in both the changing environment and in the new priorities that PEP heralds. Education will not be capable of developing broader purposes that incorporate mainstream secondary and tertiary sectors (and, less directly but inevitably, the primary arena) without staff development within a PEP framework. Such development cannot be just for those teachers initially developing PEP concepts. TAFE and the Schools Commission acknowledge this. Furthermore, there is a need for professional development and for changes in initial teacher education - in those sectors where it exists.

The first year of PEP has been marked by tension, some confusion and solid achievement. The announcement of the program triggered enthusiasm some of which has dissipated in the Program's unfortunately protracted

development stage. The National Conference confirmed the high expectations of the Program and, despite the initial difficulties of melding national and State policies, the widespread goodwill that exists for the goals of PEP. It did not, of course, debate whether the Government's policy of the reform of existing institutions is more appropriate than other totally new or supplementary approaches to youth and labour market problems being undertaken overseas.

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